A. B. Ma

NEW MASSES

DECEMBER 7, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COP

IN TWO SECTIONS OF WHICH THIS IS SECTION ONE

Included with this Issue: A Twenty-Four-Page

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

Notes on the Cultural Front by Michael Gold
Back to Work . . . . . A Story by Leane Zugsmith
A 'Nation' Divided . . . . . by Granville Hicks
Poetry in 1937 . . . . . by Horace Gregory
Literary Fascism in Brazil . by Samuel Putnam
Madrid to Manhattan A Story by Hyde Partnow
Two Poems . . . . . by Muriel Rukeyser

Other Verse by Hugh Macdiarmid, John W. Gassner and Irene Hendry

Is Latin America Going Fascist?

THE SECOND ARTICLE OF A SERIES

Argentina: Democracy in Extremis

By Ricardo M. Setaro

Norman Thomas on the Side Lines

By Robert Forsythe

Spain's Shirt-Sleeve General

By Edwin Rolfe

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

PLANNING has come into Robert Forsythe's life in a big way, and from now on he will write an article for us every single week. We have made the neat heading which adorns page 12 in this issue partly for its decorative effect and partly as a reminder to Forsythe of his weekly chore. Next week he writes on his trip to the Soviet Union.

Bruce Minton, co-author with John Stuart of *Men Who Lead Labor*, the best seller on Modern Age's list, has just returned from Spain, and rejoined our staff as labor editor. William B. Smith has been handling labor coverage for us during Minton's absence.

We are informed by the editors of the *Nation* that because of lack of time they are not able to send us their comment on Granville Hicks's article "A 'Nation' Divided" (in the Literary Supplement), for inclusion in this issue. They intend to publish an answer in the next issue of the *Nation;* apropos of which we shall probably have something further to say on the matter ourselves.

We wonder how the author of the following letter will like the idea of Forsythe's weekly page:

"Re Mike Gold's query in the *Daily Worker* on how many of the sympathizers read the NEW MASSES and the *New Republic* and *Nation*, I've gotten the NEW MASSES for so many years that I feel old when I think of it, and I've got the others only occasionally. I will say, however, that many times I've got the NEW MASSES as I take medicine, because I thought it was good for me. Boudin's article on the Constitution was swell. Many of the other things, particularly some of the fiction, give me a pain in the neck. I'm probably old-fashioned, but I still like stories to have a kick and to read like I'm used to seeing life. I want more cartoons and especially strips; possibly never got out of my childhood, but I still read the Sunday funnies first and I never got over the idea that Bob Minor was a helluva lot more use to the movement as a cartoonist than a writer. We run schools for writers and speakers, but we still treat cartooning like most of the comrades in the 1920's did unions. We give it all the moral support one could ask, and that's all. Speakers, columnists, and dancers are fine, but one good cartoonist like Del or Ellis is worth more to the workers' movement than a hundred of the others. Might say I haven't read the *Sunday Worker* for months, mainly because it didn't put in the comic strips it was going to specialize in. I read the *Daily* because I want the news.

"Maybe we work our writers too hard and pay too little, but we haven't a single columnist who can stack up with Heywood Broun—or am I being hard on the boys? Time after time a column is a rehash of what is in the news for days and with mighty little seasoning.

"Good luck, BILL."

Our Readers' Forum gets results:

"On behalf of my four daughters and myself will you please accept thanks for the publication of my letter of 10/10/37? We would also like to thank all those who have replied. In all, we have had twenty-six replies; Joan has had twelve, Bessie three, Mary two, Peggy one, and myself eight.

"To those who have not received replies from us: we have not forgotten you, comrades, but owing to economic circumstances, we are afraid that you will have to await your turns. You will all get replies eventually. We find that we have as many as we can manage at present—especially the girls who have to find the cost of stamps out of their meager pocket-money allowance.

"My friend, who is the Secretary of our local Labor Party, and also his daughter, Muriel, aged thirteen, would also like one or two correspondents. The address is: Ralph Beech, 46 Markham Road, Edlington, Nr. Doncaster, England.

"Yours fraternally,
G. W. HOLLOWAY."

What's What

LAST call for the NEW MASSES Ball! Friday evening, December 3, Webster Hall in New York! New Yorkers, we'll be seeing you!

Meanwhile, make an entry in your date-book. The NEW MASSES has taken the whole house for *Pins & Needles* (reviewed in this issue) for the night of Wednesday, January 12. The New York *Times* and the NEW MASSES agree in giving it rave notices.

Michael S. Quill, head of the Transport Workers' Union and American Labor Party city councilman-elect from the Bronx; Jacob Baker, president of the United Federal Workers of America; A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping-Car Porters; Richard Hale, baritone; and Robert Reinhart, newspaperman and magician, will be on the program at the annual dinner of the League for Mutual Aid, which will be held at seven p.m., Wednesday, December 8, at the Roger Smith Grill, 40 East 41st St., New York.

A dance for the benefit of the Brooklyn *Eagle* strikers will be held Saturday, December 4, at the Livingston, 301 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn.

The NEW MASSES business department wants it known that the office is open Saturdays till five p.m.

Who's Who

A. B. MAGIL, who has contributed frequently to our pages, is on the staff of the *Daily Worker*. . . . Ricardo M. Setaro is director of the Argentinian newspaper *Nueva España*. . . . Edwin Rolfe, formerly of our staff, is editor of the *Volunteer for Liberty*, organ of the English-speaking members of the international anti-fascist brigades in Spain. . . . Jay Peterson, who makes his debut in this issue, is an art critic by profession. . . . Henry Hart edited the recent *The Writer in a Changing World*. . . . Joseph Freeman, a contributing editor of the NEW MASSES, is at work on a forthcoming book. . . . Michael Sayers, play editor for Norman Bel Geddes, is an Irishman who has done dramatic criticism for *Life and Letters Today*, the *New English Weekly*, and the *Criterion*. His short stories have appeared in *Left Review*, and the latest issue of O'Brien's *Best British Short Stories* contained one of his short fictional pieces and was dedicated to him. . . . Notes on the contributors to the Literary Supplement are contained on page 23 thereof.

Flashbacks

JAMES B. MCNAMARA, who has been a political prisoner longer than any other man in the world, was sentenced to life on December 5, 1911. A union officer, he was found guilty on charges growing out of the war of the Los Angeles employers for an open-shop town. Most of McNamara's twenty-six-year stint has been done at San Quentin, but recently he was transferred to Folsom prison as a disciplinary measure. "Uncle Jim," as the other prisoners call him, has grown far too popular as an entertainer. He writes, sending news of his continued affection for the International Labor Defense: "Greetings to all the branches—and twigs and leaves, and may it blossom!" . . . And speaking of California's class war prisoners—December 8 is a day on which the world sends greetings to Tom Mooney. It is his birthday. . . . On Dec. 2, 1859, the trap dropped from under the feet of John Brown, and he was hanged for his efforts to help Virginia slaves find freedom.

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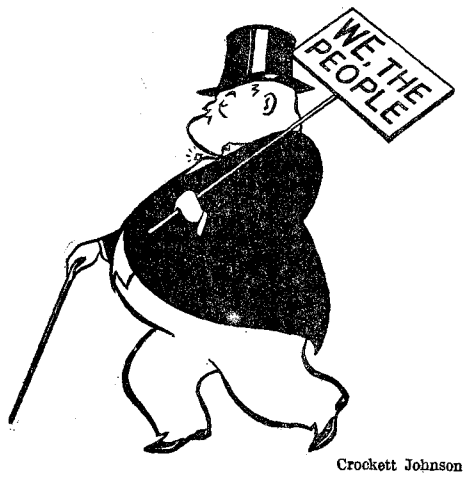

Crockett Johnson

The Middle West Says: No Retreat

By A. B. Magil

FROM reading certain newspapers I learn that "the country" is demanding the repeal of the taxes on undistributed corporation profits and capital gains. According to these same unimpeachable sources, "the country" is positively clamoring for an end to government spending and insists on nothing less than a balanced budget. And it seems that quite a number of devoted representatives of the people in Congress are determined to be "independent," to cease being "rubber stamps," and to heed "the country's" wishes.

Not being Walter Lippmann or Dorothy Thompson, I don't profess to be in "the country's" confidence. But I recently spent several weeks in the industrial and farm regions of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, and I can testify (though Senator Vandenberg would no doubt break a lance with me concerning Michigan) that the flaming national desire for "caution" and curtailment of "government extravagance," which the clairvoyant Miss Thompson deduced from the results of the recent elections, is hardly a flicker in those parts.

Get out of New York, go west, young man or woman, and feel down to your very roots the marvelous fluidity of American life. The people are in ferment. Old values, old political loyalties are in the process of being cashiered. There is no sure footing, no peace, no content for those who are compelled to drag and cajole a livelihood out of this old capitalist system. "The country" wants less taxes for the rich? "The country" wants less relief, no fixing of minimum wages and maximum hours, no government efforts to provide cheap electric power?

Minnesota says they lie. Wisconsin says they lie. Michigan says they lie.

In the course of my trip I interviewed labor leaders (both C.I.O. and A. F. of L.), farm leaders, high government officials such as Governor Benson of Minnesota, Commissioner of Agriculture Charles Ommodt of Minnesota, and Attorney-General Orland S. Loomis of Wisconsin, and talked to all sorts of average people—shopkeepers, farmers, factory workers, people on relief, barbers, bootblacks, bartenders, cab drivers, and Western Union girls. I don't pretend to have done any exhaustive research, but I think I got some idea of the sentiment in that part of the country.

First, one general observation. President Roosevelt, as even some of the tory newspapers have been compelled to admit, is as popular as he was in November 1936, if not more so. Roosevelt is popular not because he has an engaging personality or a good radio voice—though these help—but because to the masses of the people he symbolizes the hope of a better life, of lifting themselves out of the pit of poverty and despair. This is what they voted for in November 1936. This is what the President pledged himself to fight for in his famous Madison Square Garden speech. The fear of a new depression—and that fear is a keen and living thing among the average folk of the Midwest—has merely sharpened the desire for economic reforms. The mood of retreat, which the tory gentlemen in Congress are trying so raucously to drum up, is not the mood of the plain people that I met on my trip.

Minnesota. I sat in the home of Farmer H. in Pine County, about eighty miles north of the Twin Cities. Farmer H. has two hundred acres of land and is milking twenty-two cows. Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? But Farmer H.'s house has neither running water nor sanitary plumbing nor electric lights nor gas. And one month after my visit, Farmer H. was due to lose the farm on which he had sweated away twenty-odd years of his life, because he couldn't keep up the payments on the mortgage.

Lots of farmers in Pine County are in the same boat or worse. This is dairy country, and the sap of life goes up or down with the price of butter fat—a price that is set not in Minnesota, but in New York and Chicago, where a handful of well-larded men decide the fate of a million Farmers H.'s with the stroke of a pen. But when I got back to Minneapolis, I was told that I had been visiting the "kulaks." "You ought to go to western Minnesota or to North Dakota and see what real poverty looks like."

There's one great asset, however, that the mortgage companies can't take away from the Minnesota farmers. That's their Farmer-Labor state government. And it's an asset that looms larger all the time. I arrived in Minnesota on the eve of a state-wide farm conference called at the request of Governor Benson. One of the reasons the farmers get it in the neck so much of the time is that they are so poorly organized—much more poorly than are the workers—and such farm organizations as there are seem to find it difficult to get together on any question.

The great achievement of Governor Benson's conference was that it really united the farmers of Minnesota on a common program of state and federal legislative action. Every farm and coöperative organization in the state, from the most conservative to the most radical, was represented. And it was a thoroughly democratic conference. The big shots of the various organizations were not allowed to hog the limelight. A blanket invitation had been extended to all the dirt farmers in the state, whether they belonged to an organization or not. And quite a number of them came.

The conference not only drew up a program designed to aid the rank and file of the farmers, but showed its understanding of the broader problems facing the American people when it held out its hand to labor. In fact, the most applauded speech, next to the welcoming address of Governor Benson, was that of E. L. Oliver, executive vice-president of

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ıbor's Non-Partisan League, who called on oor and the farmers to champion each ner's interests and unite for political action. During my stay in Minnesota and Wisconı, I found abundant evidence of this rising ıtiment for coöperation of workers and rmers. Evidently this sentiment is growing ıtionally; witness the action of the recent ıtional convention of the Farmers' Union in ıting to invite representatives of both the .I.O. and the A. F. of L. to meet with the ganization's board of directors for a disıssion of common problems.

The Minnesota farm conference was imɔrtant in another respect: it has served to rengthen the support of the Farmer-Labor dministration among that section of the popılation that is likely to be most vulnerable to actionary propaganda.

The economic royalists of Minnesota have ɔ more accepted the verdict of last year's ate elections than have the economic royalıts of the country the outcome of the naonal balloting. They hate Benson for even ıore reasons than they hate Roosevelt. And here is a ferocity in their hatred such as Minıesota has not known since the days when he Non-Partisan Leaguers were mobbed and ıunted like wild beasts for opposing the war.

Class war rules the political arena in Minesota. The executive departments of the tate government are in the hands of the Farmer-Labor Party. In the lower house a oalition of Farmer-Laborites and liberal Democrats gives Governor Benson a working ıajority. But the Senate is nothing but a anch of the steel trust, the banks, the railɔads, and the insurance companies. In other ords, what Dorothy Thompson and Walter ippmann would call "independent." It is a ich man's heaven, with the lobbyists as ıngels, and deserving tories of both Republican and Democratic persuasions getting the ewards.

The Senate nearly wrecked Governor Benon's entire program, particularly its compreıensive tax proposals designed to shift the ɔurden of taxation from levies on property, vhich bear down heavily on farmers and mall home-owners, to taxes on high income. No wonder that, when I asked the governor what his program for the future was, he said grimly: "To convert the reactionary Senate majority into a liberal majority. If I can't do hat, I don't want to be reëlected."

Nor are all the reactionaries in the Republican and Democratic Parties. That would make things comparatively easy. The Farmer-Labor Party is a going concern, and it has its hare of careerists and right-wingers who would like to make peace with big business ınd make war on the Communists and progressives. Some of them, like Hjalmar Peterıen, former lieutenant-governor and now ailroad and warehouse commissioner, fight Benson more or less openly. In the columns ɔf the tory press Petersen has already asumed the stature of a major statesman, and e has become a favorite speaker at businessıen's clubs. Others, like certain job-holders and top leaders of the A. F. of L., profess to support Benson in the hope of driving him to the right.

Then there are the Trotskyites. If you want to see a microcosm of world Trotskyism in action, go to the only American city where the Trotskyites have any influence among the workers, Minneapolis. Communists are sometimes accused of exaggerating in regard to Trotskyism. But the doings of the Trotskyist Dunne brothers, who control the Truck Drivers' Union in Minneapolis, speak for themselves. These disciples of the Führer of Coyoacan are hand in glove with the most unsavory A. F. of L. reactionaries and underworld racketeers, and fight the C.I.O. tooth and nail. And they are among the chief enemies of the Farmer-Labor Party and the Benson administration, doing for the Republicans what the Republicans cannot do for themselves.

Wisconsin. Cross the state line into Wisconsin, and you feel as if you've come from a strange land back to your own stamping ground. That is, if you happen to be an easterner. In Minnesota one hears of "eastern bankers," "eastern industrialists," eastern this and that. The sense of sectional separateness is strong. Actually, this is merely the external form of a deep-rooted class feeling; it is the struggle of the poor farmers of the Midwest against the Wall Street monopolies—the struggle that created the old Farmers' Alliance and Populist movements of the eighties and nineties, that found rebirth in the Non-Partisan League of the war and post-war period, and that today fertilizes the Farmer-Labor Party.

Minnesota is still predominantly agrarian and most of the industrial life is concerned more or less directly with the processing of farm products. In Wisconsin, however, factory and farm are on a more equal footing, and the weight of heavy industry lies over the state.

Peter Verdi

The farm regions of Wisconsin, as of other states, have in recent months been flooded with reactionary anti-labor propaganda. Among the chief sources of this propaganda are certain so-called farm papers and magazines, some of them undoubtedly directly subsidized by big business. Perhaps you've heard of *Rural Progress,* edited by that tinfoil liberal of Madison, Wis., Dr. Glenn Frank, who has vast, and thus far unrequited, yearnings for the Republican nomination for President. There's nothing of the hick magazine about *Rural Progress.* It's a streamlined monthly, and it opposes wages-and-hours legislation, Supreme Court reform, government development of electric power, and other such invasions of the sacred rights of corporate greed, with sophisticated fervor and candid camera élan. The magazine claims a circulation of two million, and there's no reason to discount that figure. Though it is supposed to sell at ten cents a copy, I didn't come across a single person in either Minnesota or Wisconsin who had ever bought one or seen it for sale. The secret of its circulation lies in the fact that it is distributed free in every mailbox in every community with a population of one thousand or less throughout the Midwest and Northwest. "*Rural Progress* gives every indication of being subsidized by big business interests," Attorney-General Loomis of Wisconsin told me. "Gives every indication," is probably an understatement.

The tradition of Wisconsin progressivism is real, though it is taken too much for granted and is in danger of going smug. There is a magic in the name LaFollette, and the memory of Old Bob is like a vestal flame in his native state. Some of that glamour today envelops his two sons, Governor Phil and Senator Bob, Jr. But unfortunately, glamour and tradition and even political office will not suffice these days when reaction fights with new and powerful weapons.

While I was in Wisconsin, plans were announced for a conference of tory Republicans and Democrats to form a coalition with the avowed purpose of fighting the LaFollette administration. The chief inspirer of the coalition move is the ultra-reactionary Milwaukee *Journal,* the most powerful newspaper in the state. Whether or not the coalition jells at this time, it is symptomatic of the regrouping of political forces that is developing nationally, and constitutes a potential threat to the LaFollette administration and the progressive organizations of the state. Yet I found among leading Progressives and Socialists a surprising complacency regarding these maneuvers and even a tendency to regard the emergence of a reactionary coalition as something of a blessing.

What Wisconsin needs is another kind of coalition, a coalition of progressives—a people's front—to short-circuit the schemings of big business and give the state's progressivism the backbone of an organized mass movement.

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"We'll teach the country to have faith in its business leaders, Montmorency. Fire another couple of thousand men!"

The lack of such a movement is the LaFollette Progressive Party's Achilles heel.

Toward the end of 1935 an effort was made to create such a coalition, the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation. This was founded by nine organizations: the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, the Railroad Brotherhoods, the Farmers' Union, the Wisconsin Coöperative Milk Pool, the Farm Holiday Association, the Socialist Party, the Progressive Party, the Workers' Alliance, and the Farmer-Labor Progressive League. In the 1936 elections the Federation ran candidates in the Progressive Party primaries, and succeeded in electing the attorney-general, the secretary of state, twenty-seven out of the forty Progressives in the Assembly, and eight out of fifteen in the Senate.

Yet after this initial success, the Federation settled down to being just another organization, with a few thousand members who exercise little influence on the political life of the state. The trouble is that the Federation hasn't federated. Instead of consisting of affiliated groups, in addition to individual members, as is the case with the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, it has been limited entirely to the latter type of membership. And sectarian Socialists on the state executive board have joined with old-line A. F. of L. leaders to keep it stewing in its own juice.

Old Henry Ohl, president of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, sat in his office and told me that it would be a bad thing to change the organizational structure of the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation because the C.I.O. and the Communists would attempt to "seize control." Apparently old Henry isn't at all worried about the reactionaries seizing control of the state government and cracking down on his own A. F. of L. unions. Ohl is one of those people who have played around with progressivism for quite a long time. At the 1936 convention of the A. F. of L. he was sort of on the fence on the C.I.O. question, but soon Bill Green put a hoop in front of him, and he lost no time in jumping off the fence and through the hoop. In fact, he jumped so hard that he jumped out of the Socialist Party of which he had been a member for years.

But twenty-nine-year-old Emil Costello, president of the C.I.O. State Industrial Council and an assemblyman from Kenosha, represents a new type of progressivism. The C.I.O. stands ready to bring ninety-two thousand organized workers into the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation if it will permit group affiliation, and it has made an official proposal to that effect. The Communist Party has long been urging this change. And the tide among the rank and file of the Federation seems to be turning against the Henry Ohls and their stale rancors and puny fears.

I might add that one of the outstanding impressions of my trip is the vigor, clarity, and skill of the work of the Communist Party in the states that I visited. The party's prestige and influence in progressive circles is something of a revelation to those who knew the days when it was an isolated vanguard, a lone voice in what seemed an impenetrable wilderness.

Detroit. Detroit is a city risen from the dead.

Three and a half years ago I sat in the office of Brigadier-General Heinrich Pickert, police commissioner of Detroit. I was there by request. The police commissioner is a large, beefy, hatchet-faced man with the refined sensibilities of a Goering. In 1913 he won his spurs as commander of the National Guards who smashed the copper strike in Upper Michigan. Since then he has been a great success. Under his regime the police have committed more murders, clubbings, and all-around mayhem than under four or five of his predecessors put together.

Police Commissioner Pickert leaned over toward me. "I'm waiting for the day when there's going to be a showdown with you people. I mean a showdown—the works." He paused. "And when it comes, I hope you're opposite me."

"I expect to be on the opposite side of you," I said.

"I mean *you* personally." And, with a sneer, "Only you wouldn't be enough for me. I could handle a half dozen like *you*."

Subsequently I left Detroit and deprived Herr Pickert of the deep joy of dealing with me personally when *der Tag* arrives.

Two and a half years later I returned to Detroit in the midst of preparations for another kind of showdown: the people of Detroit were in the thick of a campaign to elect a candidate for mayor who had pledged that his first public act would be to fire Pickert.

And so, when I say that Detroit is a city risen from the dead, I am trying to express the miraculous, breath-taking difference between the Detroit that I knew from 1933 to 1935—a city buried in the grave of the open shop—and the Detroit of today, throbbing with the life-blood of unionism.

Detroit is the largest one-industry city in the world, and until the rise of the C.I.O. United Automobile Workers, it had all the oppressiveness of a company town. The sense of terror was palpable, and behind each face lurked a possible spy.

The transformation that has taken place has left its imprint on every phase of the social, political, and cultural life of the city. It is an eloquent testimony of the indestructible vigor and deep creativeness of the working class—and a guarantee of its ultimate victory.

As I was leaving a street-car only a few days before the Detroit election, the conductor spotted the "Vote Labor" button I was wearing. He leaned over and said: "Do you think we'll win?"

My blood tingled at that "we." No, "we" didn't win. The mistakes that were made, the narrowness of the labor campaign, the failure to pursue a broad people's-front policy have already been analyzed in the NEW MASSES, and I won't take the space to discuss them here. But in that defeat are the seeds of coming victory. And when more of the people—not only the workers—learn to speak and act in terms of "we," then "they"—the Pickerts and their ilk—will get that showdown they so richly deserve.

As for the Wall Street hatchet men who are trying to get away with legislative murder in Congress, they, too, are reckoning without their host. The American people have yet to say the last word.

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IS LATIN AMERICA GOING FASCIST?—II

Argentina: Democracy in Extremis

By Ricardo M. Setaro

THE political distance between Argentina and Brazil lies in the difference between two elections. In Argentina there recently occurred an election which was expected to decide whether the republic would survive or yield to the bluster and barbarism of fascism. That day of reckoning was postponed; but the democratic and fascist choices before the country were placed in sharper focus than before. In Brazil, an election contested on similar grounds would shortly have been held had not the would-be Hitler, Getulio Vargas, staged a cold coup precisely in order to prevent any such option.

Argentina, then, still permits what has been forbidden in Brazil. The struggle still takes legal forms. Argentine fascism has not yet found it possible to outlaw the opposition parties. But the democratic parties still lack the strength and unity sufficient to secure themselves against any such attempt.

ARGENTINA, unlike Brazil, has developed political parties with more or less identifiable programs, which are not wholly dependent upon "strong men" for their existence. Indeed, there is a multiplicity of groupings, ranging from extreme anarchist to outright fascist. On the left this diversity tends to make unity more difficult. Equally notable is the fact that the Argentine bourgeoisie has for many years been divided along progressive and reactionary lines. This too has tended to make the country's politics far more complex than anything found within its huge neighbor to the north.

There exists only one party, the Unión Cívica Radical, with any widespread popular support. The "radicalism" of *Radicalismo* in Argentina may roughly be likened to that of middle-of-the-road Democrats in the United States. This party tasted but could not hold onto power. It first came into office back in 1916 with Dr. Hipólito Irigoyen as president-elect. Irigoyen, a man of the *caudillo* type, was an ardent advocate and defender of national interests in his resistance to imperialist encroachments.

Irigoyen was succeeded in 1922 by another Radical, Dr. Marcelo de Alvear. Unfortunately, this regime permitted the reactionaries to regain a good deal of the influence lost under Irigoyen, who was returned for a second term in 1928, but this time under circumstances far less favorable than those prior to his retirement. Against Irigoyen and *Radicalismo* was arrayed a concentration on the right which still finds it advisable to operate under different names in various provinces. Its most frequent designation is that of Partido Demócrata Nacional. Most people recognize the identity of purpose behind the various provincial incarnations by lumping them all together under the single head, Concordancia. The main backing for this movement comes from the most reactionary landholders combined with the larger banking and business interests.

Roberto M. Ortiz of Argentina

Irigoyen resisted manfully but without plan. Against a determined reactionary bid for power, both he and his supporters committed so many mistakes that the Concordancia actually discredited *Radicalismo* in the name of that national interest which was Irigoyen's strongest appeal. On September 6, 1930, Irigoyen was overthrown by a coup which set up General José Uriburu as its fascist-minded dictator.

Uriburu's road to power was greased with oil. In the bitter conflict between American and British interests, he sided with the latter. But the new regime lacked stability, and soon popular sentiment veered back to *Radicalismo*. The tide against Uriburu could not be stemmed, so the dictatorship sought to hide its nakedness behind "democratic" drapery. A pitiful farce of an election was stage-managed in the latter part of 1931, and General Agustín P. Justo, who posed as a "moderate" against the intransigent Uriburu, came into office. The Radicals were outraged at the patent injustice of the maneuver. They declared that politics was a disgusting spectacle with which they no longer intended to be contaminated. Indeed, this Radical abstinence had to be overcome before Justo could feel his position secure.

GENERAL JUSTO has occupied the presidency for the past five years. Throughout this period, he has pursued two principal objectives. First, he strove to "legalize" the fraud by which he had been elected. In practical terms, this meant that he had to woo the Radicals back into politics. So long as they stayed aloof, his claim on the presidency might at any time be challenged by the very methods which had hoisted him into office. Secondly, in pursuance of the Uriburu policy, he intended to assure the domination of British capital over every aspect of Argentina's economic life.

Justo succeeded fairly well both ways. The Radicals did return to the polls. They voted for deputies and senators, and even attained a slim majority in the Chamber of Deputies as time rolled on. British interests likewise continued ascendant over all others. For instance, a law establishing a transportation monopoly permitted the British to purchase lines previously controlled by competing foreign capital.

The expiration of Justo's term confronted the people with a choice not unlike that of 1928 when Irigoyen came in for his fateful second administration. The standard-bearer of the Concordancia or rightist coalition was Dr. Roberto M. Ortiz, the finance minister of the Justo cabinet, a renegade from *Radicalismo* which he had supported until the 1930 coup, and an attorney for British-owned railways. The Radicals supported Dr. Alvear whose previous term in office had been extremely instructive to him. The Communist Party favored the formation of a people's front against Ortiz in support of the Radical candidate. The Socialist Party split in two on the issue. One group, newly organized as the Partido Socialista Obrero (Socialist Workers Party), supported the popular-front position in favor of Dr. Alvear. The other group, still known as the Socialist Party, made a futile attempt at presenting its own candidate, Dr. Nicolás Repetto, a reformist leader.

But this time, a new element entered into the already complex politics of Argentina. Italian and German fascism played an active role in the campaign. One phase of this activity may be cited. No less a personage than Luigi Federzoni, the president of the Italian Senate, arrived in Buenos Aires for a pre-election speaking tour. He harangued the electorate no end against the "Communist menace" and the "people's-front danger." The population of Argentina is overwhelmingly European, principally Italian and Spanish

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in origin. Thus when Federzoni called upon all Italians to organize against the "Communist menace," his intentions escaped no one. There are in Argentina organized groups of Italian-born, German-born, and Spanish-born fascists, besides those of native vintage. All attended the Federzoni meetings in full regalia.

THE ELECTION was held under circumstances that made on honest vote impossible. At the head of the government was a man whose career had been a *mésalliance* with fraud and deceit. The extreme reactionaries, avowedly fascist, scoffed at the election and felt that the situation could be properly met only by another military dictatorship with General Juan Bautista Molina at its head. In the two leading provinces, Buenos Aires and Santa Fé, which controlled one-fourth of the total votes, armed intervention of the national government deposed the local governments in order to prevent the opposition from balloting.

That election day, early in September, came with unprecedented forebodings of serious clashes, and the possibility of armed dictatorship. Large placards virtually announced a fascist uprising by General Juan Bautista Molina. Another general with the same surname, General Ramón Molina, announced that he would stand by Alvear in defense of the popular will. His words were interpreted as the challenge of revolt should a coup be attempted.

The Justo government was less demonstrative but more shrewd than Bautista Molina's fascists. Votes cast for Alvear were converted into votes for Ortiz through the alchemy of plain swindle. In towns of the Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, and Mendoza provinces, Alvear adherents had to fight arms in hand for the right to vote. In Buenos Aires proper, after the election the people poured into the streets to take power by any available means, for the intended fraud was apparent to all. Alvear counseled prudence. This in itself was the result of trickery. The Posts and Telegraph Department held up all messages from the interior which might indicate Alvear's defeat. Only favorable reports were allowed to reach him. This actually caused Dr. Alvear to believe that he was going to be permitted to take office.

Without question, 70 percent of the voters favored Alvear. But the official tabulations gave him only 815,053 against 1,093,928 for Ortiz. In the city of Buenos Aires itself, however, Alvear was credited with 250,000 votes against 120,000 for Ortiz. No doubt this proportion was maintained throughout the country. But the election was not held under a government committed to legality. On the contrary, reaction was determined to win, by fraud if possible, by force if necessary.

Ortiz, the new president, will not find it easy sailing when he takes office in 1938. He does not have a majority in the Chamber of Deputies. A new election for the chamber is scheduled for March 1938. To win this, the Concordancia will have to perpetrate a fraud greater even than that of last September.

Whether Argentina is to go all the way along the path already taken in Brazil may be decided on that March day of next year when the people go to the polls once again.

Ad F. Reinhardt

Isolationist's Dream

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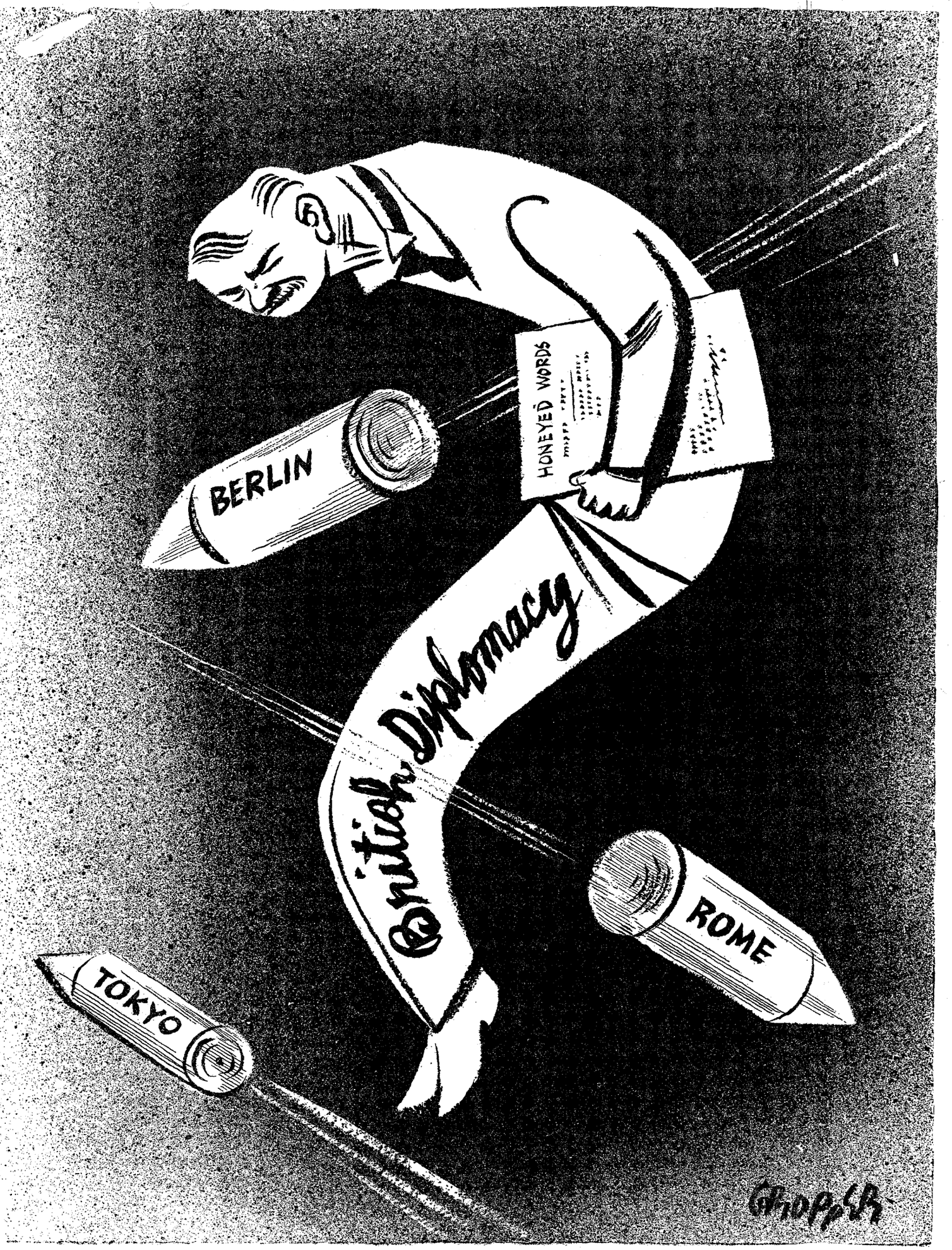

William Gropper

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Proposing a Miracle

THERE is no doubt that the spending of twelve to sixteen billion dollars on new housing in the next five years would help "recovery" and ameliorate to a substantial extent the situation in which one-third of the people are ill-housed. By the proposal just made by Mr. Roosevelt, however, it would accomplish these objectives at the expense of labor. In making the reduction of wage rates for building workers an integral and heavily emphasized part of his housing proposal, President Roosevelt has taken over bodily the main program of finance capital, which is now, as it has been since 1929, to make the workers pay for the depression.

This is to be a privately financed (but government-insured) housing program. According to the President's proposal, capital and labor will now sit down together and sharpen up the knife with which labor will then proceed to cut its throat. The seasonal character of building construction is one of the chief reasons for the hourly rates for union building workers being what they are. In any construction program this seasonal factor will remain. For more than half a century building workers have known that since they can't work when it rains, snows, or freezes they must eke out their income in working weather. The employers have known it, too, but that has not prevented them from fighting every advance in wages, and conceding raises only when forced to. President Roosevelt's proposal for capital-labor collaboration on wages indicates that he has faith in the possibility of a major miracle. Union men do not believe in miracles. One of the first comments on President Roosevelt's proposal for this most sweeping wage cut—the 1930 census reported more than 2,500,000 building industry workers—comes from the ultra-conservative secretary-treasurer of the building trades department of the A. F. of L., Michael J. McDonough, who said:

> We are not in accord with the proposal for labor to reduce its hourly wages to help promote a building boom. Similar proposals following the 1929 crash proved unsuccessful because when union officials had reduced wages to the maximum, building contractors held off in the hopes that wages could be forced even lower.

When an A. F. of L. top official—who speaks of "union officials" reducing wages, not the rank and file—has learned this obvious lesson, that there is no way of inducing a capitalist to take less profit than he thinks he can get, it is time the President, who put a wages-and-hours bill high up on his "must" list for the special session, should become aware of it, too.

Lynch-Law Lady

TYPICAL of the tactics of the anti-New Deal bloc in Congress is the use of the Gavagan-Wagner Anti-Lynching Bill as a political football. Dixie Bibb Graves, senator from Alabama—the state with the highest percentage of lynchings—in her maiden speech invoked the specter of states' rights. Mrs. Graves warned Congress that "only a compelling emergency should cause this body to strike down the sovereignty of indestructible states." To the lady from Alabama, twenty-seven lynchings in 1935 (of which six occurred in Alabama), eighteen lynchings in 1936 (one in Alabama), and at least nine lynchings so far in 1937 (one in Alabama), do not represent an emergency.

The filibuster against the Anti-Lynching Bill, so ably abetted by Mrs. Graves, is engineered by the leaders of what Congressman Maverick of Texas has labeled "the revolution of big money." Its object is to woo New Deal supporters from the administration on the false issue of North versus South. No legislator dares openly defend lynching as such, hence the concern for states' rights. Mrs. Graves's tearful plea, "You should seek the truth, know the truth, and the truth will make you free," would aid greatly in making the Anti-Lynching Bill the law of the land if the truth that the great majority of American people abhor lynching and desire realistic action to stamp it out were sufficiently impressed on members of Congress.

Labor in the City Council

THE results of New York's proportional representation elections for the City Council demonstrate again labor's newly found political power and clearly point the way for a broad people's front. Although Democrats have retained a bare majority, with eleven or twelve of the twenty-six seats going to Tammany men and two others filled by anti-Tammany Democrats, the election of five out of seven American Labor Party candidates and the strong showing of Communist entries plainly mark the end of the old machine-rule in America's largest city. By comparison with the Board of Aldermen, which had only one anti-Tammany member, the new Council represents a startling change.

The total Communist vote, approximately 74,000 first-choice ballots, is an absolute gain of about 15 percent over the 1936 total cast for Israel Amter for president of the Board of Aldermen. In Brooklyn Peter V. Cacchione with more than 30,000 first-choice votes, failed of election by only 245 ballots on the fifty-eighth subsequent count. But even these important gains do not fully reflect the added strength of the Communist Party. In 1936 Amter received only 2.25 percent of the total valid votes, while this year's 74,000 amount to almost 4 percent. By contrast, the Socialist Party again lost ground, dropping from 1.9 percent of the total in 1936 to 1.6 in 1937.

Impressive as these gains are, they signify only a successful *beginning*. Thus the total first choice ballots for American Labor Party candidates was only about half the number cast for Mayor LaGuardia under the Labor emblem. And the very considerable shifts that resulted from the subsequent counts (second, third, etc., choice-ballots) indicated that the lack of a fuller labor slate and an intensive city-wide drive to elect Council members proved costly in the final tabulations. With this lesson behind them and a strong minority block in the present Council, progressive elements in New York City can rally more determinedly than ever for a united front.

Propaganda for Franco

GENERAL FRANCO has announced that he can no longer spare Spain the horrors of war. It seems that Franco has been withholding an irresistible offensive just because he hates bloodshed. Meanwhile he has despatched bombers over small unprotected towns near Madrid, and in one raid alone killed fifty women and children. Franco says he is consumed by a passion for peace—on terms of unconditional surrender. Failing to obtain a capitulation, he will attack.

This threat of a great military push coincides with the return of Lord Halifax, lord president of the council of the British cabinet, from a heart-to-heart talk with Hitler. Lord Halifax discussed with Hitler the advisability of Great Britain's granting Franco belligerent rights without delay, thus giving the Spanish fascists the formal right to buy arms and to blockade the Spanish coast. In essence, the non-intervention policies of England and France, as well as the

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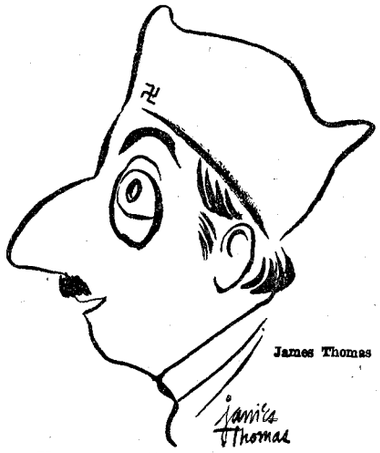

Franco—"peace crusader"

direct aid of Germany and Italy, have already granted these rights. Yet Franco is angling for even greater support from his German and Italian allies in addition to English approval of a complete naval blockade of Spain, possible only with the assistance of the Italian and German navies.

For Franco realizes that the trained army and strengthened fortifications of loyalist Spain can withstand any attack, however severe, that he can launch with the forces now at his disposal. He must persuade England to give him even greater leeway than "neutrality" has already offered. The "armistice" and "peace talks" provide the English tories with propaganda they can use to present Franco as a humane crusader longing for peace. The Spanish premier, Juan Negrín, has pointed out that Franco's peace is nothing more than a demand that the Spanish government surrender unconditionally to invasion. His reply was that only an unconditional victory over Franco, the front for the fascist powers that seek complete domination of Spain, can form a basis for a peace acceptable to the Spanish people.

Censoring Stokowski

THE world's best music, as everybody knows, comes to you weekly through the courtesy of Henry Ford, Alfred P. Sloan, and the gentlemen of the Chase National Bank and twenty affiliated financial institutions. In addition to the music, Alfred dispenses sales talk for his automobiles, Henry dispenses homespun homilies, and the boys of the Chase National Bank dispense good will.

Of late, however, there has not been very much good will between the Chase gang and Leopold Stokowski, the conductor of their Monday-night symphonic programs. Apparently fearful that when the revolution comes t may be preceded by a good marching song, the Chase boys are keeping an eye on Mr. Stokowski's programs. Recently they refused to permit the conductor to play the First Symphony of Shostakovich, simply because it was Soviet music and hence likely to incite to riot, revolution, and the downfall of our most sacred institutions, such as the Chase Bank.

We only wish it were as easy as that, and that the men who write the world's music were more powerful than the men who control the world's moneybags. But this has no bearing on such flagrant censorship as has obviously been imposed here. Mr. Stokowski, we know, believes in spreading music to the masses, and we are with him in that worthy endeavor. But who is to judge what music the masses shall hear? The Chase National Bank? If so, aren't we at least entitled to a song-sheet with our monthly reminder that our balance is overdrawn?

Free (Poisoned) Air

BUT while censorship cracks down on anything even indirectly suggesting cultural communion with that friendly power, the Soviet Union, direct political propaganda goes on unhindered from those self-proclaimed enemies of democracy, the Nazis. For some time now there have been recurrent complaints that such propaganda was being aired over "German hours" broadcast by various stations. The source seemed difficult to discover, and the responsibility hard to fix, but last week William Leick of the Cleveland *Press* exposed a well-organized network through which Nazi propaganda was being smuggled out into the American ether.

Ernst Kotz, short-wave broadcaster for the National Broadcasting Co., was named the head man of the Nazi radio propaganda machine here. He, the exposé stated, had charge of distribution of recorded programs, ostensibly merely musical, which contained, interlarded between the musical numbers, such stuff as: "A new spirit prevails in Germany, infused by the Fuehrer, whose untiring efforts for a new and united Germany should inspire every German at home and abroad," or "the Fuehrer maps the course; we follow." Snug in his N.B.C. berth, Kotz worked through regional offices in Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, and San Francisco.

The Rev. John Foisel, Cleveland representative of the German Educational Service (as the radio propaganda machine is called), also told Leick in an interview that motion pictures are on the bill of fare, and that these will be released through "private groups" in the near future. The Federal Communications Commission should act at once to put a stop to the importation of these anti-democratic blurbs from Hitler's propaganda ministry.

Elixir of Death

NINETY-THREE persons have died after taking "elixir sulfanilamide" and of these seventy-three are known to have lost their lives "as a direct result." So Congress was informed last week in a full report on the case furnished by Secretary Wallace. It is clear from the report that all these deaths could have been avoided if the manufacturers had curbed their greed just enough to make a few simple experiments.

The fatal elixir was rushed onto the market without adequate tests to determine whether or not diethylene glycol may be safely used as a solvent for sulfanilamide deposit, previously published reports in scientific literature showing that diethylene glycol might be dangerous when taken internally [the report said]. A few simple and inexpensive tests on experimental animals would have quickly demonstrated the toxic properties of both diethylene glycol and the "elixir."

Having saved the money involved in making such tests, the S. E. Massengill Co. sent out its elixir of death. For weeks afterward government agents raced back and forth, burrowed through mountains of records, exerted enormous efforts to recall the poison. The report to Congress, in detailing the gigantic efforts made to seize all the elixir, spares no words in condemning the manufacturers, even reproducing the telegrams the concern sent out in order to show that these "were not calculated to impress receivers with the emergency character of

FACTS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION—IV

VICTORY OF COLLECTIVE FARM SYSTEM

	1918	1929	1930	1934	1937
Number of collective farms (in thousands)	1.6	57.0	85.9	233.3	243.7
Number of households in collective farms (in millions)	0.02	1.0	6.0	15.7	18.5
Percentage of collectivization:					
In number of peasant households:	0.1	3.9	23.6	71.4	93.0
In area under crops	no data	4.9	33.6	87.4	99.1

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the call for returning the goods." The Federal Food and Drugs Act is inadequate to cope with such situations in advance, Congress is informed. And given a legal loophole, the urge for profits did the rest.

More Fascist Feelers

FOLLOWING the line laid down by Germany and Italy, Brazil recently began banning the "Bolshevik" arts. After accusing *Tom Sawyer* of being a Red, they barred the United Artists-Fritz Lang production, *You Only Live Once*. That was before Brazil became an official fascist state. Since then, according to *Variety*, the censors in Brazil have banned *The Road Back* and *They Gave Him a Gun*. *The Road Back* is described by the fascist press as a film "written by a man, enemy of the nationalist government of his country, and therefore a Jew and a communist." *They Gave Him a Gun*, which was a bad film with a good idea, was condemned because it "hampered the development of a sound patriotic mind."

No doubt some fascist-minded big shots in Hollywood will attempt to make this the excuse for a general ban on all progressive action by writers, directors, and actors in the picture industry. We recently pointed out one such effort: a news story in the Hollywood *Reporter* alleging that the anti-fascist stand of many stars might bring serious losses in foreign business. This feeler produced no results, so a variation was tried the other day on the air, in a radio gossip column conducted by Lloyd Pantages. Mr. Pantages conceded that private individuals were entitled to work for their own political beliefs, but that producers could not allow these beliefs to "hurt business." This suggestion drew quick protests from the Motion Picture Artists' Committee, and now *Variety* announces that Mr. Pantages is off the air.

For a Warless and Democratic America

THE Pittsburgh congress of the American League Against War and Fascism summed up one period and began another. Its future course is entirely predicated on the substantial achievements and rich experience of the past. But the interval since the last congress has been a fateful one. Problems arose which the League had never before fully encountered. It had to take time for the solvent of experience and education to break down deeply-rooted illusions and prejudices. At Pittsburgh, the leaders of the American League, more than one thousand in number, took stock of what had been done, considered what remained to be done, and made those adjustments in policy and organizational set-up necessary to realize a warless and democratic America—and world.

Superficially, the dividing line has been marked by a change in name. Henceforth the League will be known as the American League for Peace and Democracy. This change was made in response to widespread sentiment in favor of positive rather than negative goals. The new name was always implicit in the old. Peace and democracy are of course the only alternatives to fascism and war. Nevertheless, the change in name is symbolic of a fuller and more fruitful conception of the League's purpose.

Nor does the voluntary and amicable withdrawal of the Communist Party—until now, the only affiliated political party—imply any sharp break with the past. The new constitution declares that political parties shall be eligible for membership when a number of them signify their willingness to join. The affiliation of several parties would automatically absolve the League of any charge or suspicion of partiality or domination. "But," as Earl Browder, the spokesman for the Communist Party, explained, "inasmuch as the great majority of you have to face enemies who cry out that this is party politics and attack the League on this ground, we of the Communist Party took the initiative to propose that until we bring a substantial number of parties into the League, we shall put this question aside and have no political party represented at all." Communists will continue as before to serve and support the League with the utmost devotion. But in common with the adherents of other parties, they will be represented only when elected as the representatives of non-party organizations in recognition of their services therein.

A more profound adjustment had to be made in respect to neutrality. The American League has grappled with this critical issue for more than two years. Any quick and easy solution was out of the question, for a diversity of viewpoint exists within the League. This diversity underlies the League's fundamental purpose to bring unity into the peace movement for the sake of common action. At the same time, it makes impossible the adoption of any policy too far in advance or out of line with the opinions of the majority in the organization.

The previous congress, held in Cleveland in 1936, found the advocates of neutrality with sufficient influence to swing the League in their direction. That congress went on record as favoring mandatory neutrality. But then came the Spanish war. The proponents of neutrality could no longer escape the logic of their position. It was clear that neutrality served the interests of the fascist insurgents and their Italo-German backers. The victory of peace could no longer be separated from the victory for democracy; fascist success plainly meant another and bloodier aggression for even greater stakes. Thus, a shift in sentiment took place within the League in favor of concerted democratic action to hinder the aggressor and help the victim of aggression. This sentiment was further enforced by the Sino-Japanese war.

The Pittsburgh congress acknowledged the new course upon which events had irresistibly driven the organization. The new "program for 1938" explicitly states that the foreign policy demanded by the League must be based on "the distinction between the aggressors and victims." This is implemented by an assertion of "the necessity of denying our economic resources to the war-making, treaty-breaking aggressors and opening them up to victims under conditions designed to remove the risk of our being drawn into war." Thirdly, "the necessity of concerted action to quarantine aggressors" is affirmed.

This progress toward clarity was equalled only by the organizational accomplishment. For the first time in its existence, the American League rests on a large and genuine trade-union foundation. Of the 1302 delegates, 405 represented trade unions, both C.I.O. and A. F. of L. Indeed, it is likely that the Pittsburgh congress witnessed a greater degree of unified effort by unions belonging to both wings of the labor movement than any enterprise since the expulsion of the te C.I.O. internationals. The trade-union repre sentation at the Pittsburgh congress was a least twice as great as that at the Clevelan congress. In the case of New York City three quarters of the entire municipal trad union movement, or 650,000 members, we directly represented at the congress, embra ing the A. F. of L., C.I.O., and railw trainmen. Of the 4,406,408 persons rep sented at the congress, 1,647,250 were bo fide trade-unionists.

The American League for Peace an Democracy now has a firm footing in Ameri can life. Its tasks are immense, but so the loyalty, the passion, the devotion at command. Its chief problem is that of m ing good the promise of this Congress. in the fulfillment of this promise lies hope and our safety.

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

Norman Thomas on the Sidelines

TO the best of my knowledge I have only seen Norman Thomas once. On that occasion he was making a speech in Union Square before a microphone, and it was a bit embarrassing to me because he had just been preceded by a Communist who may have been a great soul but who was most assuredly a bad talker. By contrast Norman Thomas resembled the younger Pitt addressing the noble judges in the treason trial of Warren Hastings. I remember that the contrast gave me a severe twinge because I was accompanied by a gentleman who took some pains to point out the difference in the speakers.

What prompts me to this memory is the news that Mr. Thomas was making a speech recently in Boston at the weekly meeting of the Community Church of Boston (nonsectarian) in Symphony Hall. The Rev. Donald G. Lothrop, leader of the church, presided. The session took place simultaneously with the world celebrations on the twentieth anniversary of the Soviet Union, and Mr. Thomas took advantage of the occasion to charge that the policies of the Soviet Union violated socialist principles. According to the news report, Mr. Thomas then added that "Russia was a poor nation mainly because one fifth of its national income must be spent on the army on which the power of the government rests."

Only occasionally am I seized by a physical ompulsion which would make it a great leasure to bash in the countenance of an tter stranger, but I must confess that the eading of those few words changed the nature of an otherwise gentle soul. *"Russia as a poor nation* MAINLY *because one fifth f its national income must be spent on the my on which the power of the government ts."* It is a sentence so inherently dishonand delicately vicious that one despairs of wering it. On its face it is a sentiment r to any decent person. We all hate milissm, we all hate war. So, if we hate ese things, we must hate the Russian army, rich, according to Norman Thomas, has not ly the faults of every army, but which in dition keeps the nation in poverty. And ich not only keeps it in poverty, but does nerely for the sake of suppressing the peoof the Soviet Union.

Nowhere does Norman Thomas suggest t there may be a need in the outside world, which might call for the presence of an army in Russia. Nowhere does he mention that from its earliest days the Soviet Union called for complete disarmament of all nations. So far as the dispatch stated, he made no mention of the menace of Germany-Japan-Italy as necessitating the army of the Soviet Union. The army, Mr. Thomas infers, is merely a device by which the present government of the Soviet Union maintains itself in power.

The bitterest part of this dishonest statement is that the threat of war has been a cruel thing for the Russian people. It is incontestably true that if it were not for the fear of war and the need of preparing to protect the Soviet Union, the people could have the consumers' goods they need. Never in all my life have I realized what war meant until I visited Moscow in September. One who believes in socialism as I do can only grit his teeth in rage when he thinks that if it were not for the menace of the fascist powers, these brave people could have the clothes they need, could have better houses, could have joy and a sense of relief. The marks of the struggle are in their faces, and one wants to weep as one thinks that they may now be faced with that battle all over again. They have fought the revolution, the civil war, the intervention of foreign powers, and famine; they have carried on a majestic struggle for industrialization and collectivization of the farms—and just when their triumph has made it possible for them to reap the rewards of their efforts, they must gird themselves again to face the hatred of a mad world.

Can even the most mendacious believe that the government deliberately altered the First Five-Year Plan to provide provisions for the Far Eastern Army at the time Japan took Manchuria? Does anybody in his right mind believe that the authorities wanted to increase the military budget at a time when it strained every nerve to keep the country alive? If all that Stalin craves is power, why in the name of all sense does he bother with industrialization and collectivization? Why wouldn't he be content to be another Pilsudski in a land of poverty and dirt and misery?

Just what is it that Norman Thomas seeks to prove by such statements? Would he be better satisfied if the Soviet Union were another China? Would he like Russia to disband its army and turn its interest solely to the production of consumers' goods? Would he trust the good intentions of such men as Araki and Hitler? What is this new fifth column of the intellect which poses such questions about Russia at a moment like this? If Mr. Thomas will recall, there was once a country known as the German republic which was so gentle with its enemies, so given to freedom of speech and freedom of action (for all except Communists, of course) that it found itself shortly surrendering the keys of Berlin to a group of men in brown shirts. Is that the sort of socialist land he wants the Soviet Union to be?

One lesson I learned in Russia this summer was that it matters very little what the Norman Thomases feel about the Soviet Union. The liberals have always been prompt to desert Russia in a crisis, and the Russians have learned not to depend upon them. At a time when the longshoremen of Seattle were refusing to load cargoes consigned to Kolchak in Siberia, the liberals were giving their entire time to a condemnation of Bolshevik Russia for failing to institute the beautiful, perfect parliamentary system which has worked so miraculously in Great Britain and the United States. A liberal is one who wastes no word of sympathy over the assassination of Kirov but who later keeps the cables hot with demands that his murderers go unpunished. The Soviet people do not understand such fine distinctions of freedom and justice. The righteous arrogance of these critics of the Soviet Union is almost more than can be borne. The pure and simple truth is that we can do nothing much for Russia, but that the Soviet Union is almost *our* sole hope. It is upon the backs of those courageous and ill-clad Russian workers that our own sweet civilization rests. In that great world conflict which is inevitable, the Norman Thomases will be on the sidelines, crying for peace and strict democracy. If his words should happen to please the powers then ruling America, he will be allowed to speak. His mellifluous voice will be raised to the peak of its sweetness. I can hear it now. . . . A Nazi spy has been caught behind the Soviet lines and shot . . . (hum-hum-hum, goes the voice). . . . This is an outrage. . . . That such things should be done in a country which calls itself socialist. . . . Why wasn't a parliamentary commission appointed to look into the matter? . . . And why wasn't the spy spared, given the benefits of education, turned into an honorable citizen, and returned to his family in Germany, where his example would be so effective as to shame Herr Hitler and his followers out of their ruthlessness? . . . hum-hum-hum. . . .

Scott Johnston

Norman Thomas

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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Spain's Shirt-Sleeve General

By Edwin Rolfe

THERE isn't a person in Spain who hasn't heard the name of "el Campesino." When one hears that a certain position is being held by men under el Campesino's command, one smiles, says "That's good," and goes off feeling very safe, very secure. Or, when el Campesino's men are attacking on a certain front, the Spaniards *know* that the attack will be successful, if it is humanly or militarily possible.

Who is el Campesino? Beyond the fact that, with Enrique Lister, Modesto, Duran, Ortega, and a few others, he has been referred to as one of republican Spain's young "shirt-sleeve generals," little is known about him outside of Spain. His real name is Valentin Gonzales—"el Campesino," meaning "the peasant," is what his soldiers call him, what the people call him, and what he likes to call himself. And, in a land where the people have an uncanny knack of hitting upon the exact nickname, his is the most exact, the most appropriate.

He is by birth a peasant. At the outbreak of the rebellion in July 1936, he hastily formed a battalion of peasants from all parts of Spain. With these men he fought the fascists in the Guadarramas—fought them so well, in fact, that an English correspondent, Geoffrey Cox, quotes the fascists as having said that "this must be a trained group of professional soldiers opposing us." Similar battalions, made up of Spaniards who had never held rifles before in their lives, were resisting the rebels in every part of Spain. But Campesino's men were in the center of things, in the thick of it, on the Madrid front. Badly clothed, hastily armed, the Campesino battalion soon earned the respect, and the fear, of its well-trained enemies. This peasant soldier, who had served his military apprenticeship in Morocco, had the ability and the personality to evoke discipline and selfless effort from the men he commanded. But slowly the normal casualties of intensive warfare thinned down his ranks. It was at Somosierra that the original battalion made its last great effort; after terrific fighting, under which few soldiers could stand up, the survivors of his original band withdrew to Madrid. The story goes that less than ten men returned—among them were Campesino himself, and a Cuban-American named Policarpo Candon. Candon is now commander of the First Mobile Shock Brigade of the 46th Division under Campesino. And Campesino himself is now division commander.

After Somosierra, Campesino enlisted the services of other loyal young Spaniards, formed a new battalion, and with them held the trenches at Carabanchel and at the outskirts of Madrid. During the critical days of last November and December—just before and just after the first international columns arrived—battalions like that of Campesino, composed wholly of native workers and peasants, held the fascists at bay, stopped them at the gates of the city, and thus changed the whole course of the war.

Bertrando Valloton

El Campesino

And this great division commander, with a wealth of diverse and dangerous experience behind him, is only thirty-three years old! Although he is of medium height—about five feet eight inches tall at the most—his large, black-bearded face and massive shoulders and powerful arms make him appear huge. He cannot enter any hall in which a mass meeting is in progress without being recognized, without the people drowning the voice of the speaker in applause and great shouts of "El Campesino! We want el Campesino!" Only after he has made his appearance on the platform and spoken a few words of greeting is the meeting permitted to proceed. How he taught his raw recruits to become the skilled and experienced soldiers that they are today can best be illustrated by the following example.

IN THE EARLY DAYS of the war, the non-mechanically-minded Spanish peasant soldiers feared, more than anything else, the enemy tanks. A battle might be progressing perfectly, fulfilling every point in its previously drawn-up strategic plan; but the appearance of tanks would demoralize the peasant soldiers, some of whom had never even seen an automobile before, throwing them into panicky retreat. Which is not strange—there is something about an enemy tank approaching, its machine guns spitting uninterrupted death, which throws fear into the heart of any, even the most experienced, soldier. Talk and explain as they might, the officers of the young republican army could do nothing to dispel this panic, this fear of tanks on the part of the men. But Campesino did not talk. When his lines on the Jarama front, early last March, spied the rebel tanks approaching, Campesino himself shouted at his men, told them to hold their lines and watch him. Quickly he fastened a number of primitive can-grenades of dynamite to his ample belt; stooping low in the hastily dug front-line trenches, he lighted a cigar (it was a Corona Corona, taken from one of Madrid's ritziest tobacconists for distribution to the soldiers—no cheaper brands were available at the moment). Then, slowly, he lifted himself through a sap, a large slanted tunnel in the parapet. From their peep-holes, his men watched, silently, breathing heavily, as he crawled along the broken earth; they watched him, breathless, as he crept into a foxhole not fifty yards away; watched him and the approaching tanks. In other foxholes between the fascist and government lines were three other courageous officers of the Campesino battalion. Finally the moment came; the tanks were almost upon him; he had not yet been seen. Suddenly he raised his right arm—the men saw the rapid arc it formed as he hurled the first of the sticks of dynamite at the nearest tank-track, and another at the tank-guns. Simultaneously, the other officers let loose their dynamite and hand grenades. In three minutes it was all over. Seven enemy tanks were out of commission, the others were in hasty and lumbering retreat. And Campesino had himself disabled three of the seven tanks. From that point on the soldiers got the idea. Campesino had showed them. If tanks were not, as they had thought, invincible, then they too could and would have a crack at them. Today, when it comes to tank-warfare, the far-famed Asturian miners have nothing on Campesino's youthful battalion of *dinamiteros,* the anti-tank battalion of the 46th Division.

Because of deeds such as this, the figure of Campesino has assumed almost mythic proportions in Spain. And his own soldiers love him.

His violent language [says Geoffrey Cox in his excellent book, *Defense of Madrid*], his capacity for sleep at any moment, his ability to secure food and supplies for his men from empty regimental storerooms are proverbial. He curses his men with the vocabulary which, in former days, he used for hi plow-team. But they take it cheerily enough, be cause they trust him as a leader, and they know he looks after them as few other Spanish commanders do. When he enters a depot the supply clerks imme-

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diately say: "No; it is impossible," but el Campesino goes out with the remaining ham and the two bags of potatoes for his column. He can sleep, too, while waiting for a meeting, even in a trench during a bombardment. Once his men had to wake him to watch an air fight overhead in which the government chasers were driving off rebel bombers. The only man he is said to fear is his daredevil chauffeur, who goes by the enigmatic name of Chocolate, and who, el Campesino says, has brought him nearer death than any rebel. One of the great things about this natural fighter is that he is willing to accept discipline. He argues in staff meetings with the utmost fury. But once a decision is taken he sticks to it. . . .

When I last saw el Campesino, his division was stationed near a little town not far from Madrid. This was just after his men had been recalled for a rest after their strenuous efforts in the July offensive west of Madrid and the subsequent insurgent counter-attacks. Entering the town, we saw numerous young soldiers strolling in the streets. It was a Sunday, and a festival was in progress. The men of the 2nd Brigade had organized a dance, to which the girls from one of Madrid's large factories—a factory which manufactures clothes and shirts for the soldiers—had been invited. And they had responded *en masse*. The political commissar of the *dinamiteros*—a nineteen-year-old veteran named Miguel Bascuñana—ushered a group of us into the large and sunny patio where the dance was in progress. Another young soldier—a Cuban-American whom I had known in the United States, who spoke excellent English, and who was now adjutant political commissar of the 46th Division—showed us around, doing the introductions. The seven-piece band alternated its tunes—first a flamenco, then "I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby!," then a vivacious Spanish waltz, which was followed by "Tiger Rag" and other popular American dance-tunes. What surprised me most was the quality of the musicians' performance—they improvised as well as the best bands I had ever heard, not barring even Benny Goodman's. Their leader was a stocky, dark-faced, smiling man who played the cornet. And what a cornet! He left his band during every number to mingle with the dancers, blowing his notes into the dancers' ears, twisting and turning, his cornet held upward, his large pistol in its even larger holster banging against the men and women among whom he made his tortuous way. "Who's that?" I asked my Cuban friend. "Don't you know him?" he replied. "That's Cueva, the hottest cornetist in Cuba." Now, in addition to his musical duties, Cueva has military responsibilities. He is a captain, in command of one of the companies in Campesino's 2nd Brigade. We would have remained for a dance or two, but we wanted to see Campesino. Before we got to him, however, our thorough Cuban commissar and friend and guide led us a merry chase through all the departments of the division, through every brigade and battalion, through dusty archives in the one-thousand-year-old city hall, and through an ancient library, found hidden in the vaults of an old castle. The parchment-bound books, our guide told us, were being packed for shipment to the bomb-proof storages in which the great art treasures of Spain are being safeguarded for the duration of the war.

We were to have lunch with Campesino, and then accompany him to the soccer-field, where two battalion teams were to play off the finals of an elimination contest, the winning team to receive a loving-cup trophy. During the meal, I had a chance to see those qualities in the man which have endeared him to his soldiers and to all of republican Spain. He sat at the head of the long, forty-foot table, exchanging quips and jests with everyone. His voice, even when he addressed his neighbor—who, incidentally had been a colonel in the Ethiopian army during the Italian invasion—his voice boomed out so sharply and clearly that it could be heard from one end to the other of the large dining room. Never quiet for a moment, always talking and gesticulating, it was surprising to see how, at the same time, he managed to empty his plate of bean-soup, of two large helpings of stew, of several small loaves of bread, and a huge cluster of grapes. The guide, seated next to me, read my thoughts. "Like magic," he said, "isn't it?"

Campesino's bronzed face glowed all through the meal. One strand of his thick black hair fell over his forehead as he talked and waved his ham-like arms in the air to illustrate a story about an airplane dog-fight. His heavy snub nose expanded and became even more snubbed when his face widened in laughter. His brown eyes laughed even when his mouth was serious. But they took in everything around him. And they became soft as a woman's when he looked upon the two young men whom he calls "my sons"—the trusted commanders of his first and second brigades, Candon and Merino.

A messenger came in while Campesino was putting away the last of his second portion of stew. "The girls from the factory want you to speak to them," he said. Campesino hastily swallowed a mouthful, rose from his chair, and followed the messenger into another huge dining hall, where the girls were eating. After a few minutes of cheering, of "Viva Campesino," he was permitted to speak.

"My dear comrades," he said to them, "I am sorry I cannot be with you longer. But you know I have many duties, even here, where such duties are pleasurable, unlike the front, where they are often tragic. You have come here to give life and courage to our brothers, our soldiers. For this I am deeply grateful. I want you to know what a great satisfaction it is to me, and doubtless to you, that you have come here to impart aid and spirit and gayety to our soldiers—our soldiers who in turn will be enabled to give so many headaches to the fascists. And it is you who, when you talk with us, mingle with us, dance and are joyful with us, give us the courage to continue. The knowledge that you do this should be, for the moment, your reward. We are made happier and more determined, we become better soldiers and better men because of your presence here. For all of this I am grateful. *Salud!*"

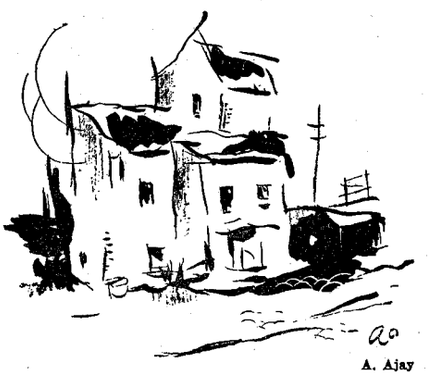
We squeezed our way through the crowd, the cheers, the cries of *Salud!* And in the courtyard, on the way back to our dining hall, another, smaller group of girls accosted Campesino. "You didn't talk to us because we are ugly," said one of the girls. She was, to be truthful, unusually homely. But Campesino answered quickly, and very gravely, although his eyes twinkled as he said it: "For me," he told them, "there are neither beautiful women nor ugly women. What matters is that you are all anti-fascists. Therefore I hold you all dearest in my heart." The girls went off, smiling.

And Campesino, the man who until two years ago was illiterate, returned to the table, having uttered, in beautiful Spanish, one of those perfectly appropriate, short speeches which are so rare in this land of long and flowery orations.

As he lifted another large chunk of bread to his mouth, the woman who was serving us cautioned him: "Ten cuidado a tu linea!" ("Be careful of your [waist] line!") "No tengo miedo," Campesino punned. "Yo miro mi linea—y siempre voy adelante." ("Don't worry—I take good care of my line—I always go forward!")

To tell the story of the soccer game, of Campesino's beautiful kick-off, of the beer drunk and the speeches made, the organized cheers and the irrepressible band, would require another article. I want to tell you of one last incident, a courtesy on Campesino's part that few could equal, a courtesy which has its own humorous angle.

As the group of us—all Americans—rose to salute the soccer-teams, Campesino beckoned one of the soldiers, scribbled a few words on a pad of paper, tore off the sheet, and told him to give it to the band-leader. I watched the messenger, saw him hand the paper to Captain Cueva. I saw Cueva smile and talk to his musicians. There was a rustling of pages as the musicians dug down deep among their music for the next number. Then, as my gaze returned to the soccer field, the cymbals crashed, and the band blared forth into a deafening but familiar tune—they were saluting us by playing John Philip Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever."



A. Ajay

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Daumier: 19th Century Revolutionist

By Jay Peterson

HONORÉ DAUMIER (1808-1879) was the greatest revolutionary artist of nineteenth-century France. This is the inescapable conclusion of a visit to the large three-room show which the Pennsylvania Museum of Art is now devoting to his work in lithography, drawings, oils, sculpture, and book-illustration. Even the æsthete should be convinced by the handsome demonstration which Henry P. McIlhenny, curator of painting, has arranged at the Philadelphia institution.

While the museum has emphasized Daumier's painting by devoting much of the space in the first two rooms to his work in this medium, it will be more to our purpose to approach the unflagging Frenchman as a lithographer. His work in this medium began officially in 1829, when the fiery Charles Philipon, proprietor of the republican weekly *Caricature,* saw two of his drawings. Daumier at the time was twenty-one years old. He had been brought to Paris by his father, a poor glazier, and had learned the trade of lithography soon after he had gone out to work as a young boy. Philipon, a tireless opponent of Charles X, felt that this young cartoonist was one who would help overthrow the man he hated. He promptly gave him employment.

Charles was overthrown in July of the following year, and no doubt Daumier's first cartoons had something to do with this. But inasmuch as France had merely exchanged the Bourbon Charles for the bourgeois Louis-Philippe, there was still work for the young cartoonist to do. In the earliest examples exhibited at the museum we therefore see him attacking the reactionary politicians, notably Dupin as a dog-like man in spectacles, with carpet-slippers and moneybag as coat-of-arms, and Joquin-Godard as a pear-shaped head with a barking slit for a mouth. The technique in these two suggests the engraving, yet they were not without their power, as the state was soon to demonstrate. When Daumier portrayed Louis-Philippe as Gargantua devouring the people's money, he was put in jail. Six months later he was released. Unrelenting, he had found his powers by 1834.

In that year he did the well-nigh annihilating *You Can Set Him Free Now* in which he pictured the body of a young man, powerful but wounded, on a bed. One arm hangs down at the side, a chain attached to it. The other is held by a brutal politico-physician, who is taking his pulse. A nearby lawyer stares at him. Other figures, seemingly resigned, peer from the background. Here the handling and idea alike are powerful, and the skill of one supports the conviction of the other. The same is true of *Rue Transnonain,* sometimes considered Daumier's

"La Soupe," by Daumier

greatest lithograph. This work depicts a workman or poor householder murdered by his bedside. He has dragged down the sheet and crushed his child under him. Foreshortened, he lies there in monumental death. To his right is another murdered person, while farther back, almost in the darkness, his wife is also spread out in death. The remorseless black at this point is relieved, and then refortified, as it were, by the fine, clear whites across the bed and central figures. *Le Ventre Législatif,* also done in that year, is equally well known. It presents the legislators on their semi-circular benches in the Chamber of Deputies, all pear-shaped, cunning, greedy, and corrupt. This work is still a kind of constant reference, both as an exposé of legislative corruption and as an example of power in the lithographic medium. Subsequent cartoonists have recognized this by basing their own legislative types upon his. Incidentally, the show contains a number of the sculptured heads which Daumier modeled in order to get greater force into his interpretation of the politicians. They suggest that the sculpturesque quality of the final black-and-white was as much responsible for the final effect as the distasteful and fundamentally sordid nature of his original subject-matter.

Another cartoon of that same year might be by a contemporary American. It relates to "freedom of the press." Here this democratic right is represented by an island, where stands a stalwart pressman. His fists are clenched. A bourgeois with umbrella raised, a cleric who is encouraging him, and a lackey who cautions both, skulk to the left, as if in a deterred offensive against that great central figure. To the other side, collapsed royalty in epaulettes and boots is being succored by a general. A second general is guarding bags of gold. Such, then, were Daumier's first political cartoons. It should be noted that they coincided with the revolutionary wave of the early eighteen-thirties.

Shortly afterwards, *Caricature* was suppressed. It was considered dangerous to the state. Thereupon Daumier's indefatigable employer asked him to portray the social foible of the lawyers, bankers, priests, and merchant (Some interpreters have argued that this shi indicated a weakening in Daumier's revolu tionary spirit, but this is not true. He wa merely forced to work obliquely.) Accordingly, in a new journal, *Charivari,* he soon developed his legalistic Macaire, the first of his great social archetypes. Also, he continued t experiment in this medium and to gain great freedom in it. We have only to follow h through the following five years, 1835 to 18 to see how, finally, in *Les Badauds,* the bla figures on the bridge have a retiring, soft vibr

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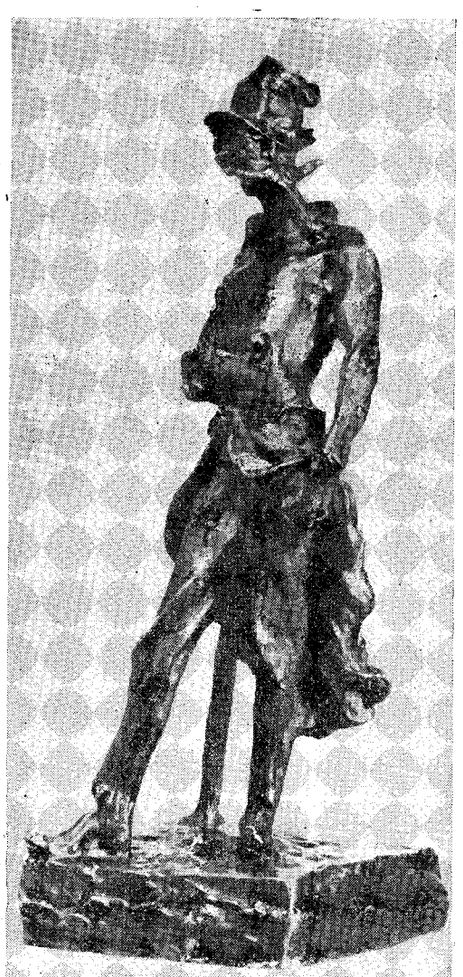
tion, while the drawing is inexpressibly delicate throughout.

In the forties he amplified his lithographic means still further. Whether lampooning the bourgeois in the rain, in the theater, in the swimming-pool, or in unhappy marital relations, he obtains greater economy, force, and variety in the medium. A growing source of his power was that more and more Daumier seemed to be bigger than the subjects he satirized: he did not see them bitterly, he saw them with a noble humor. They were ridiculous figures struggling with ridiculous preoccupations. He saw them as men who did not approach any high human standard. But they had pretensions. Therefore they doubled their own littleness. This explains how he seems to crush with ease. In this sense, Daumier was always objective.

IN 1848 HE RALLIED to another revolution. His *They Pretend to Support the State,* of the next year, is a veritable trumpet-call to all those who would stand up for liberty. Here Liberty, serene and strong, stands alone while bankers, pedants, brokers, and lawyers pretend to support the pedestal on which she rests. Daumier never championed liberty more powerfully than when it was endangered. Similarly, he never lashed the grasping ones more savagely than when they were threatening the rights which he valued. Hence the *Retired Hardware Merchant,* of this same period, in which two petty tradesmen rest under the trees, seeming to reduce the landscape to a desolate accompaniment of their own emptiness.

In the fifties he continued to hammer at rulers as well as at pretentious little men who thought that they were kings in their own spheres. One whole series of this time was called *Idylles Parlementaires.* At this time, too, he created that priceless, foolish old fellow, Ratapoil, the tatterdemalion Bonapartist who supported the king despite an empty tomach (just as the poor of today come out o see a coronation). The finest of his sculptures in the present show is a rough bronze f this figure. In the mid-fifties he also directed a fierce cartoon against the injustices f czarist Russia. He directed others, seemingly countless, against the manners of those ho were profiting from the current regime France. In one, he pictured a prosperous ousewife trembling as an enormous butcher, nd on cleaver, demands, "Is your bourgeois freedom for the butchers?" In one of the st memorable of all, a fat profiteer sits in athtub at the theater. He can bathe and the spectacle at the same time!

Then sometimes Daumier does a cartoon hich deepens everything that he has said efore, in which he seems to pour out his very pths. Such a work is the immortal *Ass and vo Thieves* in which a traveler is set upon, en to death, and his horse stolen. Here, is dark defile where an innocent man is murdered, is the universal tragedy of as Daumier saw it in the nineteenth cen-y. This was a summation of his period. It was, indeed, the summation of all periods when the vicious, the greedy, the merciless prey upon those who wish only to live peacefully (as the people in Spain today). When Daumier did these supreme works, there is a seemingly limitless space behind his figures, as if they were set in the midst of the world; and the figures themselves have a monumentality that towers, spreads, or seems to stand higher than they do as figures. Such works justify Balzac's comment that "Daumier had Michelangelo under the skin." A good inverse example of this is *The Convinced Bourgeois Family,* in which a merchant and his wife, like overgrown dolls, dominate a landscape. Everything has been reduced to their littleness. True, Daumier makes them large; but we know that the largeness exists only in their minds. Hence we hear a giant laughing at them. The film *The New Gulliver* at times suggested a similar satire. But most of the time during the late sixties and seventies—that period of successive German aggressions in Denmark and Austria and France—Daumier is hitting out directly. Frequently he portrays the fearsome god of war. Sometimes he depicts a bound young giant, blinded, who might well be the oppressed French working classes. These, his supreme works to the present observer, are not cartoons; they are sculpture which merely happened to be done in the medium of the black-and-white. As before, they coincide with a period of revolutionary crisis. It is no accident that the final lithograph in this show, dated 1872, pictures the French workers storming the barricades.



Sculpture by Daumier

But it should not be forgotten that Daumier, the revolutionary, could be quite as tender as he was angry. The famous drawing, *La Soupe,* for example, portrays a mother suckling her child, even as she hurries down her own few mouthfuls of nourishment. This is poverty indeed. It is likewise one of the finest drawings the master ever did. Here plastic and social content are one, as they must be for social art to be of permanent importance. Another example, equally touching, is *Mother and Child,* which has a Chinese subtlety of drawing. The darker areas of wash in crib, babe, and mother caress in the same manner as the mother does her child. In such works, as well as in the famous Don Quixote series, the artist's hand seems almost careless. He is in a reverie as he draws. On these occasions he approaches the Chinese masters of the past. At other times, his drawing delineates an indefinable margin, an image as it were of the lines which our eyes make in space as we attempt to follow an elusively moving object. This same negligent quality is discernible in another, where a clown is constructed by a series of connected whorls, which looks very easy, but which in fact is a distillment of a life's practice.

Daumier's clowns, by the way, suffer as they laugh. They shake and they cry out. A reason may be suggested for this. Daumier, who did almost four thousand lithographs during his lifetime, had always wanted to paint. He felt that cartooning was a frustration. Another reason, of course, is that Daumier had a great comic spirit. The depths in him wept, even as he made merry. Pity ruled him. Pity for the millions, for the weary, for the oppressed, for the homeless, for the aged, for the helpless, for all those who could not stand up and fight for themselves. The drag of the world is in Daumier, and that is why men love him. As Forain said, "Daumier wasn't like us—he was generous."

Related depths are to be found in his painting. Most notably there is *The Laundress* from the Louvre, *Third-Class Carriage* from the Metropolitan, *The Street-Singers,* and *The Drunkards.* In each of these the fundamental preoccupation was the same. Everything that he did sprang from social feeling. He cried out from anger, and underlying the anger was endless pity. This he conveyed with a depth that seldom varied, with a modeling that was sculpturesque, with a unity between figure and background which was not to be realized again until Cézanne. Thus, though Daumier regretted that he painted so little, we need not. Whatever his medium—even sculpture—he communicated that great order which he saw and which, in time, was to wear down that other, seemingly omnipotent order which oppressed men in his own time.

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READERS' FORUM

Orchids for Dorothy Parker

TO THE NEW MASSES:

CONGRATULATIONS to you and Dorothy Parker for the most moving piece yet on the Spanish war. Not only moving and beautiful. But true and diggingly deep. Perhaps the essence of the entire struggle in Spain is in her observation that "I don't think there will be any lost generation after this war" . . . because "they are fighting for more than their lives. They are fighting for the chance to live them."

We in Hollywood are so happy for Dorothy Parker. So happy for her gallant desertion of the lost generation. Happy for her joining in the leadership against the fascist bloodsuckers. Her pioneering in the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, the Motion Picture Artists' Committee for Spain (about to initiate an international drive for Christmas toys and milk for Spanish children) excite us and cheer us forward.

We are proud of Dorothy Parker. And proud of the NEW MASSES which gives her highest talents such ready forum.

Hollywood, Cal. JOHN BRIGHT.

The Silk Boycott

TO THE NEW MASSES:

AT least one error occurred in the anti-silk article by Mississippi Johnson and myself last week. To my knowledge, the vogue which arose from the play *Getting Gertie's Garter* was not net hose, but a revival of fancy garters. Perhaps there were also net stockings in it; I didn't see them. So far as we know, this was one of the widespread properties which became popular.

I am now more certain than ever that this is a movement that will click—what with the yeoman work of the students especially. Personally, in a little undercover test, I sold seventy-five boycott-Japanese-goods buttons in two days, using only incidental time. I can scarcely keep one on my lapel.

If the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. implement their resolutions (say with a slogan on their quarterly dues buttons), lisle should soon be marching across the country the way denim and corduroy did in 1920!

I especially like that Washington University resolution against dating up silk wearers. There is the true glory and arrogance of youth.

LEONARD SPARKS.

New York City.

Hearst Not Welcome in Hawaii

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE Honolulu papers have announced the coming to Hawaii of William Randolph Hearst. He is to arrive in Honolulu on December 16 with a party that includes Marion Davies and that was to include the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

Mr. Hearst and his party, should they come to Hawaii, will occupy the Waikiki beach residence of the rich playboy C. R. Holmes. Mr. Holmes's mother, the well known Betty Fleischmann Holmes of New York, one of the wealthiest women in America, was one of the most active members of the fascist American Liberty League during the last presidential election campaign.

We, as lovers of liberty and truth, protest the coming to Hawaii of a man who has always opposed everything that stands for human decency, justice, freedom, and intellectual honesty; a man who has viciously and mercilessly attacked the right of American workers to organize and unionize and build a better America.

We do not want in our midst a man of whom America's foremost historian, Dr. Charles A. Beard, declared at the fifty-sixth annual convention of the National Education Association held at Atlantic City, N. J., on February 24, 1935: "There is not a cesspool of vice and crime which Hearst has not raked and exploited for money-making purposes. No person with intellectual honesty or moral integrity will touch him with a ten-foot pole for any purpose or to gain any end. Unless those who represent American scholarship, science, and the right of free peoples to discuss public questions freely stand together against his insidious influences he will assassinate them individually by every method known to yellow journalism—only cowards can be intimidated by Hearst."

We call on the progressive workers and anti-fascist fighters of America to sound a storm of protest that would resound even to the gates of San Simeon and thus halt the invasion of Hawaii by the arch-enemy of truth, progress, and labor. We do not want fascist Hearst and his kind to pollute our shores.

K. HIROKAWA,
Honolulu, Hawaii. JUN OKANO.

Walt Whitman to the Russians

TO THE NEW MASSES:

AT this time when so many Americans have sent warm expressions of friendship to the Soviet Union on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, you might like to reprint the following letter written by Walt Whitman to the peoples of Russia. The letter was written from Camden on December 20, 1881:

"Dear Sir:

"Your letter asking definite endorsement to your translation of my *Leaves of Grass* into Russian is just received, and I hasten to answer it. Most warmly and willingly I consent to the translation, and waft a prayerful God-speed to the enterprise.

"You Russians and we Americans! Our countries so distant, so unlike at first glance—such a difference in social and political conditions, and our respective methods of moral and practical development the last hundred years—and yet in certain features, and vastest ones, so resembling each other. The variety of stock-elements and tongues, to be resolutely fused in a common identity and union at all hazards—the idea, perennial through the ages, that they both have their historic and divine mission—the fervent element of manly friendship throughout the whole people, surpass'd by no other races—the grand expanse of territorial limits and boundaries—the unformed and nebulous state of many things, not yet permanently settled, but agreed on all hands to be the preparations of an infinitely greater future—the fact that both peoples have their independent and leading positions to hold, keep, and if necessary, fight for, against the rest of the world—the deathless aspirations at the inmost center of each great community, so vehement, so mysterious, so abysmic—are certainly features you Russians and we Americans possess in common.

"As my dearest dream is for internationality of poems and poets, binding the lands of the earth closer than all treaties and diplomacy—as the purpose beneath the rest in my book is such hearty comradeship, for individuals to begin with, and for all the nations of the earth as a result—how happy I should be to get the hearing and emotional contact of the great Russian peoples.

"To whom, now and here (addressing you for Russia and Russians, and empowering you, should you see fit, to print the present letter, in your book, as a preface) I waft affectionate salutation from these shores in America's name.

"WALT WHITMAN."

At a time when the inner and real meaning of democracy so concerns the progressive minds of the world, I think this word from the author of *Democratic Vistas* to the peoples of Russia, so penetrating, so prophetic, and so relevant today, deserves republication.

New York. MILLEN BRAND.

John Heliker

Appeal from the South

TO THE NEW MASSES:

SHARECROPPERS' children are likely to miss out on Christmas this year. Thirteen dollars a month doesn't go very far in supplying a family's essential needs, let alone its urge for Christmas toys.

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This job is being undertaken for the second year by Pioneer Youth of America. Your readers are invited to join in helping. Packages of toys and nice clothing should be mailed or expressed postpaid to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, 2527 Broad Avenue, Memphis, Tenn.

AGNES SAILER,
New York City. Extension Director.

Ignoble Prizes

TO THE NEW MASSES:

FOR a long time I have had an idea that I wanted to pass on to you. It's a skeleton idea, and you would have to put the flesh on it.

We have heard a lot about the Nobel prizes. I suggest the NEW MASSES initiate annual "Ignoble prizes" in the fields of art, science, medicine, literature, peace, etc. It could be your own enumeration of persons distinguished for outstanding acts of disservice to humanity in various fields, or it could be in the form of a contest, with nominations presented by readers—or it could be some other variation.

In any event, why not have distinct public recognition of those who hinder progress, by making them the recipients of "Ignoble prizes"?

You can be sure of one thing: there will be plenty of competition in such a contest.

Detroit, Mich. MAURICE SUGAR.

[Thanks to labor-lawyer and labor-candida Sugar for a good idea. Next week the NEW MASS will name an all-American "ignoble prize" footbal team.—THE EDITORS.]

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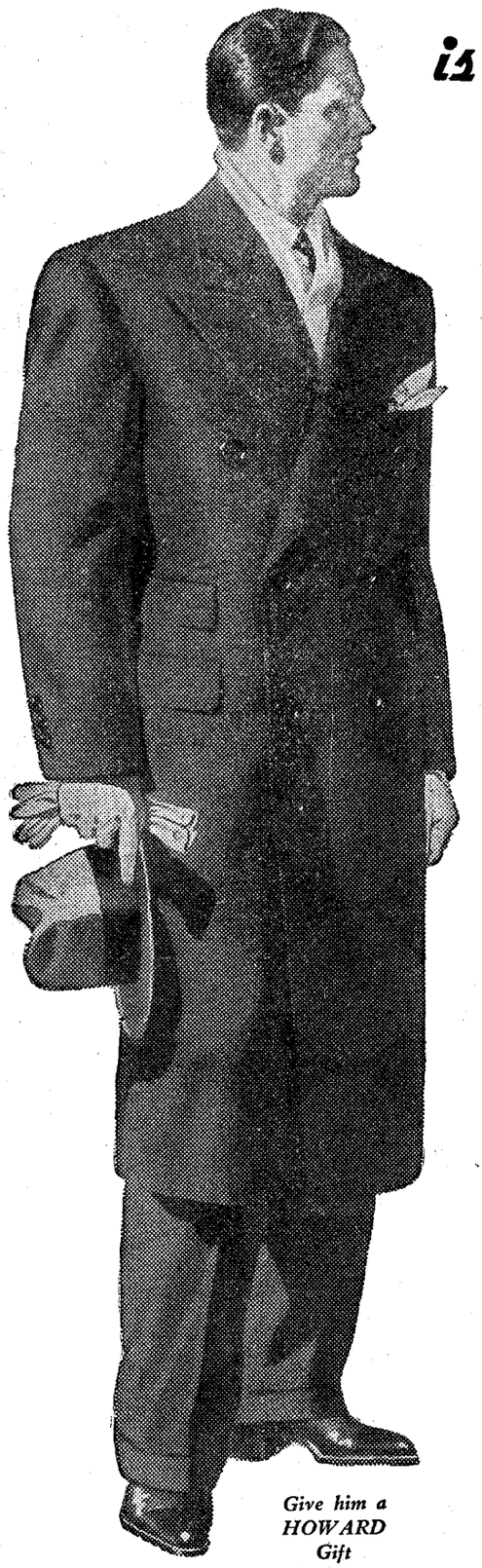

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BOOK REVIEWS

Elmer Rice's Debut As a Novelist

IMPERIAL CITY, *by Elmer Rice, Coward-McCann, Inc.* $3.

IN his valorous attempt to portray the life of as complicated a city as New York, Mr. Rice has manipulated the tricks of a skillful playwright with an old-fashioned Dreiserian hand. The result, for myself, is an interesting self-portrait of the author, but there will be many who will enjoy the melodrama of this novel for its own sake.

As Mr. Rice has undoubtedly discovered, since his declaration a few years ago that he would never again write a play, a novel discloses more of the personality of its creater than does any other literary form. A novel of the magnitude of *Imperial City* is an arena in which the author, at the end, can stand quite naked. When a piece of work doesn't quite come off, the infirmities of the poor human being out of whom it came are pitilessly exposed to view. It is the fear of such exposure, of course, which deters so many from ever setting pen and brush to paper and canvas, and paralyzes many painters and writers in the midst of their careers and in the very midst of a piece of work. Mr. Rice has *not* been deterred, and his attempted portrayal of his native city is far from inconsiderable.

The primary structure of this novel is the one employed most successfully in our own day by Dos Passos, *i.e.*, the selection of types from different strata in the population, and hence from different geographical areas of the city. After depicting each person on his native heath, engaged in a pursuit characteristic of his social position and his psyche, these people are mingled together in accordance with the complications of a plot which bears more or less similitude to life. This structure imposes one inescapable burden upon the reader. He must start the novel a half dozen or more times, familiarizing himself with new people in new situations, unrelated to the people of the preceding chapter. It is not until the reader is well along that the characters begin to meet and their lives to merge.

The way in which Mr. Rice has selected his types of different strata of population is interesting. He has selected them from the newspapers, very often the tabloids They are all melodramatic people. It can be argued that they *ipso facto* fail to typify; but this need not necessarily be so. The range of his selection is definitely representative—Wall Street, Park and Fifth Avenues, the upper East Side, Greenwich Village, Times Square, Central Park West, Morningside Heights, Harlem, the Bronx, the lower East Side, Brooklyn, Queens, and Coney Island.

It is inevitable that Mr. Rice would be more at home in some quarters than in others and that certain characters would suffer. For me the central characters suffer—the Coleman family, through which Mr. Rice portrays the plutocracy that exerts the dominant power in the imperialist city of New York. I found them given names they would not have in life; speaking as Dreiser might have them speak, and as they most certainly do not speak today; and with the tags of their prototypes plainly in view. They are presented to the reader with delicacy and envy, and it is as though Mr. Rice had never met them except in the tabloids and the society columns.

The love affair of Gaillard Coleman is one of the dreariest examples of unintended anemia in current fiction. Mr. Rice is never very happy in his depiction of the tender passion. It is noteworthy that almost all of the coition in this novel—and there is a good deal of it—is achieved through supplication by the male. This feminine quality may account for the over-idealization of Gaillard Coleman. His prototype in real life is incomparably a finer, stronger, and better person.

And it is this Gaillard Coleman whom Mr. Rice prefers. His intrusion of his preference is artistically wrong and intellectually telltale, and the utilization of such a two-legged, pre-war futility for the keystone of his novel is an irreparable structural flaw. With such a keystone the edifice is artistically unsound, for no such childish building blocks are at the core of the ruthless and dynamic city of New York.

How and why did Mr. Rice perpetrate this fatal mistake? By accepting and nurturing such intellectual naïveté as the following: "There's nothing like a social point of view for taking the joy out of life"; the troubles of mankind "can be traced to biological and psychological causes—and just to the plain inexplicable"; "not one in a thousand takes an abstract interest in good government or is animated by a definite social philosophy"; "returning travelers tell me that every year thousands of pilgrims visit the shrine in Red Square where the body of St. Ilyich lies miraculously preserved." The last phrase is uttered by "a noble old man"—the father, incidentally, of the girl Gaillard Coleman is woo-woo-wooing. Some of these phrases are author interpolations, and there is interior evidence that all of them meet with Mr. Rice's approval.

Woodcut by H. A. Blumenstiel

Were Mr. Rice free of his predisposition toward half-truths, which seems to have persisted from his pre-war adolescence, he might have treated the Coleman family with a strength that is frequently visible in other parts of the novel. The satire he achieved in dissecting a play imported from England, for example, is strong and effective. So are his characterizations of those people to whom he feels superior. He is capable of great skill, as in the first indication of the homosexuality of Christopher's mistress; and capable of some god-awful plopping clichés, as in the rape of Miriam, and in the ham melodrama of Christopher Coleman, Fanny Coleman, and Ruby the tramp. It is curious how little universal sympathy for the human being there is in this book.

The manipulation of a hundred different characters in order to produce overlapping of lives, so that the same people stand in different relationships to as many of the other characters as possible, has entailed considerable agility and some drawing of the long bow of coincidence. For the most part, Mr. Rice has managed this contriving well. Some of the tricks, through repetition, become quite mechanical, such as ending chapters with a blackout just before the couple gets into bed. The dishonesty of the trick with which Mr. Rice ends the book (borrowed from Frank Stockton) can only be considered a residue from his years in the theater. It is a piece of press agentry of which Mr. Rice should be ashamed.

This novel is about contemporary New York. Yet a large slice of the plot is the Harry Thaw case; the politics are those of a Clarence Darrow liberal; the writing is like Dreiser. All that is closest to the person of the author seems to belong to the immediat past. He has done his best, and he has neithe altogether succeeded nor altogether failed. It was a major effort, and he may want to t again, reinvigorated, perhaps, with a knowledge that, for the artist, faith and participation in the struggle of humanity must nev cease.

HENRY HART.

Scientific Socialism: A Source Document

ENGELS ON CAPITAL, *translated and edi by Leonard E. Mins. International P lishers.* $1.25.

THE most authoritative introduction Marx's *Capital* can now be obtained a book just published under the title *Eng on Capital.* Leonard Mins is to be congrat lated for his translation and editing, and I ternational Publishers for issuing this unu collection of papers by Marx's closest fr and life-long collaborator; it makes avai to the public explanations of Marx's idea

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one who participated in their elaboration as the co-founder of scientific socialism.

This book contains Engels's synopsis of the first volume of *Capital* and his supplement to the third volume, giving further details on the development of surplus value. It further contains letters, articles, and reviews of *Capital* written by Engels at various times. One of these he wrote in English for the *Fortnightly Review*, then edited by John Morley. To facilitate its acceptance, he had one of his English friends sign it, but Morley turned it down anyway and it has never been printed until now. What the famous liberal editor rejected was a lucid exposition of ideas that were to revolutionize the world.

One of the simplest expositions which Engels did was the one which appeared in Wilhelm Liebknecht's Leipzig paper and which opens the Mins collection. Written for workers, it outlines with brief and beautiful clarity the theory of surplus value. When this is grasped, it becomes easier to understand the central conflict of capitalist society.

> The surplus labor of the worker, over and above the time necessary to replace his wages, is the source of surplus value, of profit, of the continually growing accumulation of labor [Engels explains. Therefore] it is to the capitalist's interest to make the working day as long as possible. The longer it is, the more surplus value he obtains. The worker correctly feels that every hour of labor which he performs over and above the replacement of the wage is unjustly extorted from him; he experiences in his own person what it means to work excessive hours. The capitalist fights for his profit, the worker for his health, for a few hours of daily rest, to be able to occupy himself as a human being as well, in other ways besides working, sleeping, and eating.

The strike is thus an inevitable product of capitalist society, and not, as Westbrook Pegler seems to think, a villainous conspiracy of the C.I.O.

Two ideas of *Capital* which Engels emphasized in his review for the Leipzig workers are worth noting here. One dealt with the possibilities of improving the conditions of labor under capitalism. The struggle for fixing the working day, he pointed out, has lasted from the first historic appearance of free workers to the present day. But only where the law fixed the working day and supervised its observance could one really say that there existed a normal working day. So far this was the case almost solely in England. There the ten-hour law had been won by the workers "through years of endurance, through the most persistent, stubborn struggle with the factory owners, through freedom of the press, the right of association and assembly, as well as through adroit utilization of the divisions within the ruling class itself."

Marx's *Capital* contains the most exhaustive material on the history of this struggle; it tells how the English workers obtained legislative regulation of the working day in their favor. The forthcoming North German Reichstag was going to discuss the regulation of factory labor, and the workers had an opportunity to elect deputies to that Reichstag. Engels urged such deputies to study Marx's

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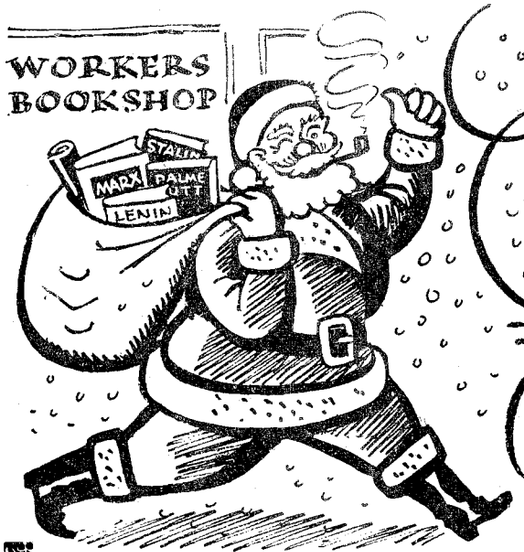

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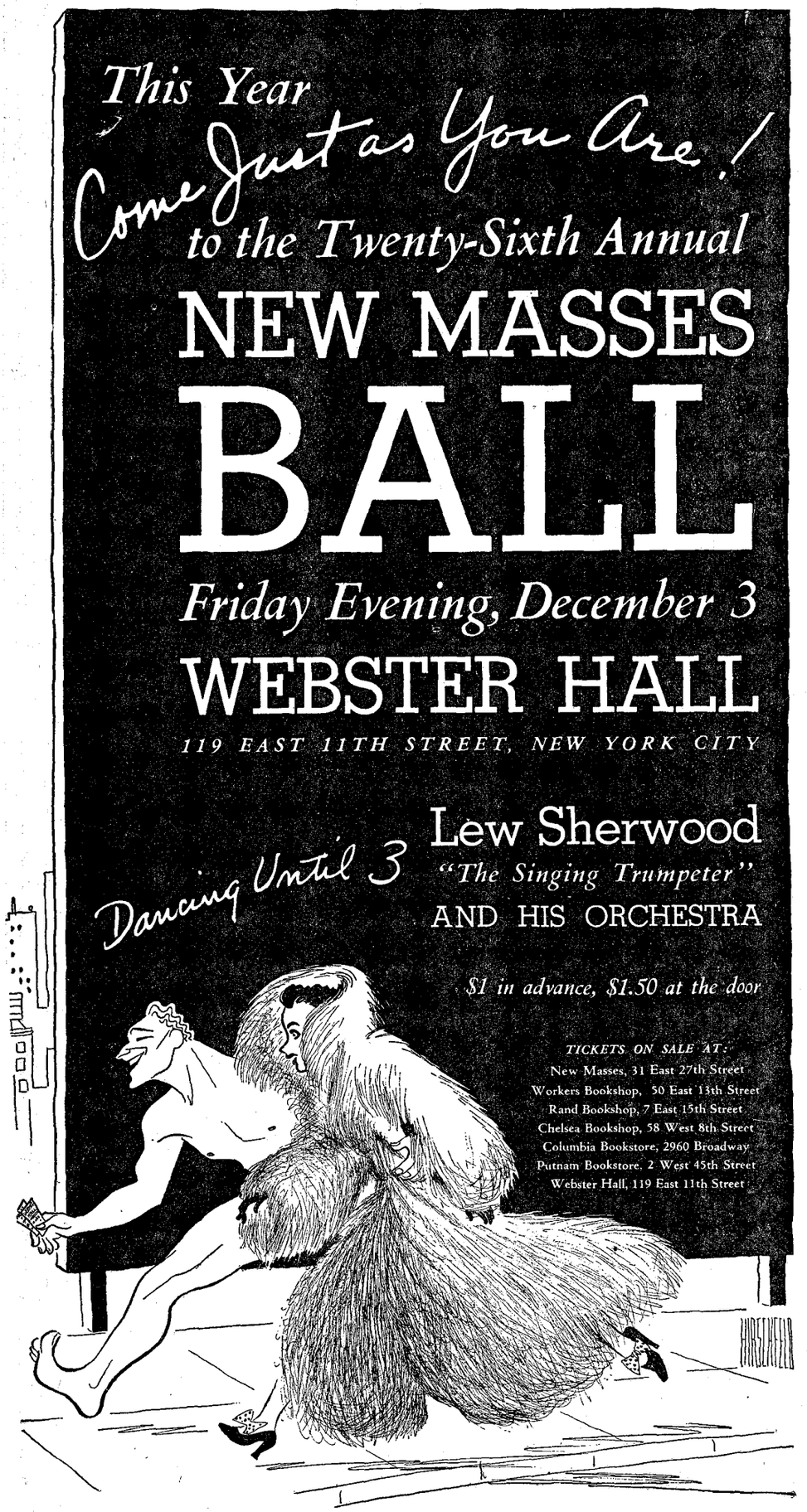
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book thoroughly, adding in his own italics:

There is much to be achieved there. The divisions within the ruling classes are more favorable to the workers than they ever *were in England, because universal suffrage compels the ruling classes to court the favor of the workers.* Under these circumstances, four or five representatives of the proletariat are a *power,* if they know how to use their position, if above all they know what is at issue, which the bourgeois do not know. And for this purpose, Marx's book gives them all the material in ready form.

After explaining how accumulation of capital results in an increase of the proletariat, Engels makes his final point explaining how capitalism gives birth to socialism:

Just as sharply as Marx stresses the bad sides of capitalist production, does he also clearly prove that this social form was necessary to develop the productive forces of society to a level which will make possible an equal development, worthy of human beings, for *all* members of society. All earlier forms of society were too poor for this. Capitalist production for the first time creates the wealth and the productive forces necessary for this, but at the same time it also creates in the mass of oppressed workers the social class which is more and more compelled to claim the utilization of this wealth and these productive forces for the whole of society—instead of as today for a monopolistic class.

JOSEPH FREEMAN.

Obituary of Europe And Gertrude Stein

EVERYBODY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY, *by Gertrude Stein. Random House.* $3.

THE mama of dada is going gaga. The dark Cassandra of the hamburgered word foretells the collapse of Europe, the "orientalization" of the western mind, and the decay of literature. The only novels which are possible today are detective stories, "where the only person of any importance is dead." The war in Spain "obtrudes itself" in one's consciousness, but one is comforted by the reflection that many art treasures were destroyed in ancient Greece and Rome and there are, after all, plenty left for people who visit in museums. It's a sour world where everybody is a father: "there is father Mussolini and father Hitler and father Roosevelt and father Stalin and father Lewis and father Blum and father Franco." Only England is cheerful, because the blessed English have no "fathering." The other bright hope for the world is Gertrude Stein, who admits that "I am the most important writer writing today" and brags that "my writing is clear as mud. . . ."

Self-confessedly "the creative literary mind of the century," Miss Stein is at least consistent in the bankruptcy of her values. What distinguishes man from animals, she has discovered, is money: "money is purely a human conception and that is very important to know very very important." The trouble with Roosevelt is that he spends so much money it soon won't exist. The trouble with Communists is that they "try to live without money"

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and become animals. Gertrude knows better, so she follows up one best-seller autobiography with another potboiler. Her passion at present is avarice, she informs us with the disarming candor of the House of Morgan.

On her American trip she lectured at leading universities, met Dashiell Hammett and Mary Pickford, skidded through the air with Alice B. Toklas. But she didn't get to see America. She was too busy worrying about Basket—her French poodle. She loves French poodles. Unlike Spanish revolutions, they don't obtrude.

Miss Stein's passion, as she confides to us, is moving around in the bathtub water. She likes to drum the Chopin funeral march on the side of the bathtub while she worries about "identity and memory and eternity." Splashing in the metaphysical surf she concludes that "Anything is a superstition and anybody rightly believes in superstition." As the dripping goddess emerges, brandishing towel and brush, she dictates to handmaiden Toklas the shattering news that "it is not at all interesting to take working men so seriously if by working men one means only those who work in a factory."

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Fact and Guesswork: Two Studies of Japan

JAPAN IN AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION, *by Eleanor Tupper and George E. McReynolds. The Macmillan Co.* $3.75.

ALIENS IN THE EAST, *by Harry Emerson Wildes. University of Pennsylvania Press.* $3.

THE measurement and evaluation of public opinion has mushroomed as a minor industry in this country. It seems almost as though elections are held nowadays in order to confirm or contradict the forecasts made by various agencies engaged in sampling public sentiment. At least one very scholarly journal, the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, published by the School of Public Affairs, Princeton University, is entirely devoted to the theory involved in these enterprises. And one formerly influential magazine, the *Literary Digest*, found that circulation collapses when election returns contradict predictions.

Drs. Tupper and McReynolds have gone to public opinion in order to understand the past rather than to anticipate the future. Theirs was much the more difficult of the two jobs. There are no doorbells to ring and no neighborhoods to canvas and no average citizens to interview. The historian is confronted with the stale remains of newspapers, government documents, congressional debates. It is hard enough to organize such data around problems that lend themselves to relatively objective results. It is immeasurably harder to reconstruct the drift of public opinion.

The book's validity rests on the methodology employed. The authors have put their faith in the newspapers of the period as reliable barometers of public opinion. In our own day, this is a highly questionable premise. The

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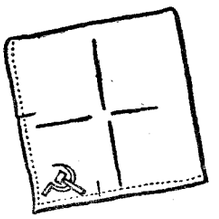

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overwhelming majority of newspapers in the United States opposed the reëlection of Franklin D. Roosevelt. A merely quantitative method of evaluating editorial opinion is obviously inadequate. Newspaper praise or criticism must itself be interpreted critically. That is just what Drs. Tupper and McReynolds fail to do.

The historical summary used to hold the book together is taken from well-known secondary works. Thus we are told some true but familiar fact, such as the opposition in America to the Twenty-One Points presented to China by Japan in 1905. Then follows a string of newspaper names intended to corroborate this information, sometimes without a single quotation. In this particular case, thirty-two newspapers are cited in one long sentence. Whenever a division of opinion existed on some question, the authors supply two such lists.

The sampling method of analysis has broken much new ground not only in the social but in the physical sciences. But it cannot be used so uncritically. It requires the utmost caution and the use of many safeguards. Foremost among these is the necessity of giving due weight and relevance to the samples themselves. Quantitative methods are possible only after a thorough qualitative analysis. Drs. Tupper and McReynolds violate this simple rule throughout their book. They have collected a mass of data but they forgot to give it significance.

They group the papers together as though each were of identical importance. They never go behind the name for the financial or other influences involved in the paper's decision. They assume that the papers speak for the "public," that vague and elusive delight of people with an ax to grind. Sometimes, it appears as though they started with some well-known fact and then went in search of "opinion" to confirm it. They could not have pursued their problem the other way round without a much sounder critical apparatus than that employed. *Japan in American Public Opinion* serves to confirm an old Marxian principle that you cannot write history without a historical theory.

Mr. Wildes has written the first exhaustive study of the westerner in Japan up to the coming of Commodore Perry in 1853. He had access to materials not hitherto available, and these permitted him to cover the subject with admirable thoroughness. A number of studies have been written of Japan's "foreign intercourse" after Perry but this, to my knowledge, is the first full treatment of the three hundred years before Perry.

The sub-title of the book, "a new history of Japan's foreign intercourse," is, nevertheless, somewhat deceptive. What Mr. Wildes has actually written is a painstaking and elaborate account of western penetration into Japan before there was anything like what might fairly be called "foreign intercourse." It is true, as Mr. Wildes insists, that Japan was introduced to western ways before Commodore Perry arrived. But the fact remains, and *Aliens in the East* confirms it, that Japan

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was sufficiently successful in keeping out western influences to make it possible for the ruling shoguns to deal with individuals rather than with powers. That is why Mr. Wildes's book is so largely the story of individuals, of adventurers, sailors, missionaries, traders, and only toward the end, diplomats and admirals. In any event, any book that ends with Perry is not fairly described by the sub-title in question. THEODORE DRAPER.

Brief Reviews

WALDEN AND OTHER WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, *edited by Brooks Atkinson. Modern Library.* 95c.

THE WORKS OF THOREAU, *edited by Henry S. Canby. Houghton Mifflin Co.* $5.

The revival of interest in Thoreau is a hopeful sign of the times. His significant position in American letters was for a long time obscured by the tradition, politely cultivated in the schools, that Thoreau was the crank of Concord, a kind of talented freak who communed with the birds and beasts near Walden Pond. Informed readers, of course, far from accepting this distortion, have recognized in Thoreau a courageous and thoughtful rebel against the social injustice of his time, especially as it was manifested in slavery, a friend of the common man, and a master of English prose. The publication of these two volumes will help popularize this truer conception, even though Mr. Canby occasionally persuades Thoreau to pull his punches.

The Modern Library edition contains most of the essential material included in the more expensive volume. In addition to *Walden, Cape Cod,* and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers,* Mr. Atkinson has included the two remarkable speeches on "Slavery in Massachusetts" and "A Plea for Captain John Brown." The most valuable additions in the volume edited by Mr. Canby are selections from the *Journals* which are unavailable in other one-volume editions. S. S.

THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF DEQUINCEY, *edited by Philip Van Doren Stern. Random House.* $3.50.

A valuable addition to the growing list of Random House one-volume editions. Like its companion volumes on Donne, Swift, Hazlitt, Coleridge, Blake, and Pushkin, this edition of DeQuincey is attractive in format and thoughtfully edited with a fine introduction. It includes *Confessions of an English Opium Eater,* other autobiographical sketches, and the better known essays. G. T.

★

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Volunteer in Spain, by John Sommerfield. Knopf. $1.50.

Counter-Attack in Spain, by Ramon Sender. Houghton Mifflin. $3.

From Spanish Trenches, edited by Marcel Acier. Modern Age. 35c.

When Labor Organizes, by Robert R. Brooks. Yale University Press. $3.

The Trial, by Franz Kafka. Knopf. $2.50.

The Chute, by Albert Halper. Viking. $2.50.

The Writer in a Changing World, edited by Henry Hart. Equinox. $2.

I Met a Man, by Michael Blankfort, Bobbs-Merrill. $2.

Socialized Medicine in the Soviet Union, by Henry E. Sigerist. Norton. $3.50.

The Romance of Russian Medicine, by Michael L. Ravitch. Liveright. $3.

Russian Medicine, by W. Horsley Gantt. Harper. $2.50.

LaGuardia, by Jay Franklin. Modern Age. 35c.

To Have and Have Not, by Ernest Hemingway. Scribner's. $2.50.

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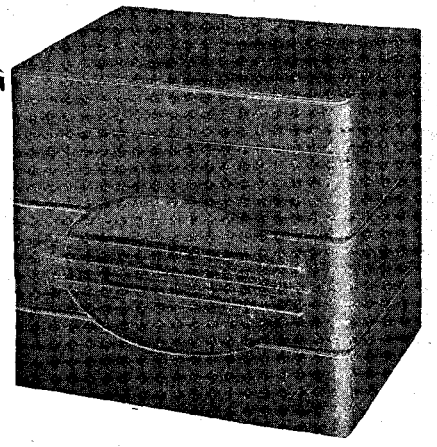

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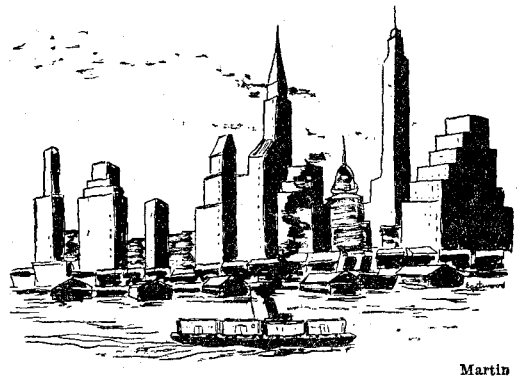
SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

New Plays by Messrs. Howard, Steinbeck, et al.

THE Theatre Guild's fourth production of the season is Mr. Sidney Howard's *The Ghost of Yankee Doodle,* which might not unfairly be described as the glorification of a family of liberals who do not choose to die with or for their ideals, but prefer to remain snug within the bosom of capital and hope for better times. According to Mr. Howard, this family of liberals is representative of American gentility: they are the last of the old stock, the dry seed of the old breed, the true and only inheritors of the noble tradition of American republican liberalism upon which the foundations of this glorious democracy have been set. Like the Theatre Guild (now picketed by its workers), the Garrison family believe in free speech, free politics, and free art—and, of course, free business. When they are faced with the necessity to choose between freedom and their interests, however, they find themselves forced to abandon the first and lugubriously console themselves with the whiskeyed reflection that their ideals are much too good for the wickedness of this world. It's a play, in short, written by a liberal dramatist and produced by a liberal theater, about the wishywashiest set of self-conscious fence-straddlers that ever cluttered a stage; and I assure you they are as ineffectual in the theater as they are irresolute in life. The head of Mr. Howard's family of liberals conveniently happens to be a retired actress of great charm and beauty. I say "conveniently" because Miss Ethel Barrymore is thus enabled to bring her own great charm and beauty to the playing of the part, which she does so well and with such sweet and ethereal queenliness that no one forgets for a moment that she represents the ghost of Yankee Doodle's wife (especially when her old beau turns up in the transparent disguise of Mr. Hearst). Well, Miss Barrymore, or Mrs. Garrison, is naturally a bit put out when a new world war begins and she learns from her brother-in-law, the head of the family business of liberalism and dye-working, that America's neutrality policy threatens the business with bankruptcy. Opportunely Mr. Dudley Digges, as the former beau press-lord, drops out of the sky and brightens the proceedings by (a) proposing marriage to her, and (b) plunging America into the war. The dye-works are saved and liberalism goes down with the curtain. But there is a sub-plot. The daughter of the Garrison household is in love with a young college professor who has been fired for teaching Marxism to his students. When the press-lord's illegitimate aviator-son makes a pass at her, the daughter succumbs and the young college professor gets quite red and talks good sense for a few lines—after which the Garrisons (and the audience, unfortunately) see no more of him. The amorous aviator goes off to fight in the war his father has helped to start and crashes en route. This ties up with the main plot by helping to expose the rottenness of the press-lord, who promptly sets about publicizing his son's death to help his war propaganda. Here Mr. Howard has done well, and Mr. Digges even better. Between them, at any rate, they contrive to stage a rounded portrait of a modern plutocrat: powerful, childish, crass, gross, oleaginous, and treacherous—and absolutely disgusting in his ideas and personality. Even Mrs. Garrison realizes this at last, and refuses to marry him.

Clearly there is sufficient here to have made a really interesting play. Mr. Howard must be complimented upon his recognition of the abomination of capitalism and his exposure, in spite of his obvious sympathy, of the futility of liberalism. His success at these static themes leaves him little excuse in his failure to write a conclusive play. He is not incapable. Simply he has not taken the pains to penetrate his own material to its root. He fumbles like an amateur, which he is not, and glosses it over with the cheapest of professional stage tricks, gags, sentimentalisms, and salacities. The play is poorly constructed; the dialogue is thin; there is a note of monotony and an incessant lack of suspense, the reason being that Mr. Howard consistently deviates from his conflict through a refusal to face it. He feels that liberal ideals are right and good: but, as he cannot admit any other basis of society than the bourgeois individual, he is forced to avoid the conflict which such ideals necessarily set up within a capitalist framework. In drama, as in science, after all, the truth holds that only in motion do bodies reveal themselves. As Mr. Howard's characters never *move,* really never do or effect anything at all, they cannot be said to obey the first law of dramatic characterization, which is *development.* The result is unmitigated dullness, a little alleviated by the efforts of Miss Barrymore and Mr. Digges, and by Miss Barbara Robbins as the daughter, and Messrs. Martin Holme, Russel Andrews, Don Costello, and Donald Mack. The remainder of the cast was distinguished mainly by inaudibility.



Martin

One of the notable characteristics of bourgeois existence is the complete stultification within it of all spontaneous human emotion. This is clearly observable in bourgeois drama wherein the heights of passion are reached when a man wins a mistress and the depth of feeling plumbed when a man loses a mistress. Apart from sex and whatever interferes with its free play, the bourgeois dramatist has no topic about which he can express himself in heartfelt terms. The whole field of human loyalties and struggles outside of the stuffy bed-sitting-room is a wasteland to him inhabited by noncomformists and children. Even friendship, that simplest of human fidelities, is something alien to the bourgeois theater. Friendship is conceivable between schoolboys: but between bourgeois adults? It is for this reason that one would not be overstating the virtue of Mr. Steinbeck's novella, *Of Mice and Men,* if one should call it a worker's myth. Its theme is friendship: the friendship of one worker for another; and in its prose form it was a tender and lyric story. The stage play, produced by Sam Harris and directed by George Kaufman, follows the story almost word for word. It is directed with decent reticence and extremely well acted by Wallace Ford as the bright-witted George, and Broderick Crawford as his dim-witted friend, Lennie. There is a superb piece of acting by John F. Hamilton, looking like a Picasso old down-and-out of the "blue" period, in the part of an aged worker who has lost his hand on his job and has nothing to look forward to but the poorhouse. And the other players, Miss Claire Luce, Messrs. Will Geer, Charles Slattery, Thomas Findlay, Walter Baldwin, Leigh Whipper, and Sam Byrd, are all good in their roles. Finally, the scenery by Donald Onslaeger is natural without being naturalistic, and far better than the usual run of Broadway sets. Nevertheless, in its translation from book to theater, Steinbeck's story has replaced tenderness with sentimentality, realism with smuttiness, and the lyric quality has been quite lost. The voice is the voice of John Steinbeck, but the hands are the hands of Mr. George Kaufman.

The Abbey Players from Dublin have produced *In the Train,* a new play in one act adapted by Hugh Hunt from a short story by Frank O'Connor. It is a fair study of various Irish provincial types returning on a train from a murder trial at Dublin. Attempting no point, it has none. The same program (Ambassador, N. Y.) saw a very bad revival of Synge's imperishable Œdipean satire, *The Playboy of the Western World.*

MICHAEL SAYERS.

THE "CONVERSION ENDING" is one of the aspects of left-wing literature which have drawn adverse criticism from bourgeois reviewers, who have by and large taken the posi-

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tion that life doesn't work quite that way. The answer has been in part that art frequently distills a meaning from life and presents that distillation in a form not always to be encountered on every highway and byway. Another part of the answer has been that the "conversion ending" in a strike play, let us say, has to do with a phase of life not particularly familiar to dramatic reviewers (but, let us hope, more familiar since Arthur Pollock of the Brooklyn *Eagle* took to the picket line), and which, hence, may seem more artificial than the realities warrant. A third part of the answer, deriving in some sense from the second, is that bourgeois criticism tends to be hostile to the aspirations of the labor movement.

How far bourgeois criticism may object to the conversion ending as such, regardless of who is being converted to what, may be measured by the acclaim with which most of the press greeted *Father Malachy's Miracle,* in which an agnostic is finally converted to the Catholic faith. I do not recall any carping on the ground that life doesn't happen quite that way. At the same time, I doubt that any reviewer except a dyed-in-the-wool Catholic mystic would argue that there was the slightest chance of life happening that way, i.e., that two miracles could be deliberately performed and so make possible the conversion. Which would seem to indicate that the decisive question for bourgeois reviewers is less the conversion ending as such and more who is being converted to what. Which is what left-wingers have contended all along.

But that isn't the whole story. The fact is that *Father Malachy's Miracle* is a skillful piece of dramaturgy, splendidly acted. It is very shrewd, genial, and human—so much so, indeed, that the trade gossip that it has the sanction of the Roman church seems at times incredible. For the cardinal who arrives to suppress Father Malachy's miracle-working seems an almost malicious portrait of a slick worldly politician—introduced by the Scottish Catholic parlor-maid as a "priest all dressed up in red, and sort of slinky-looking." Elsewhere the Roman hierarchy is referred to by another Catholic as "them Eyetalians," and there are a dozen other unanswered slights on revered symbolisms, as when the Scottish Catholic bishop, peeved at Rome's anti-miracle-working attitude, asks the cardinal to relay the information to Rome that when the Scottish branch of the church undertakes miracles, it won't go in for "any tomfoolery about cockerels laying golden eggs on altars"—a recent embarrassing miracle cited by the cardinal. This touch and go, as well as the common substance of love-story comedy, give the play a lively interest—an interest too keen for some of the devout, apparently, because members of the audience were seen to develop definite huffs and leave after the first act.

But about the conversion ending: it's not a violation of dramatic logic in this play for it to take place; certainly it would be too odd if a pair of authentic miracles done before the characters' eyes could not accomplish a con-

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version. And apparently Rome thinks it has some value as a propaganda play. How much more hope, therefore, is there for the conversion ending in a labor play or a peace play, where the factors leading up to the conversion can seem convincing not only to the characters but also (because the factors are not miracles, but can be drawn from the life known to the audience) can convince the spectators. The moral seems to be that a social propaganda play as human and skillful as *Father Malachy's Miracle* can pack a propaganda punch ten times as heavy—and who knows, perhaps seem real even to bourgeois critics.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

A PROMINENT LABOR LAWYER watching the I.L.G.W.U. players in *Pins and Needles* remarked, "This Garment Workers' Union dates back before the Triangle fire." Seen from that long perspective, the sparkling revue presented by Labor Stage takes on added brilliance. As the opening number points out in catchy rhythm, the actors are "plain, common, ordinary, everyday men and women who work hard for a living." All are members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, eleven locals being represented in the large cast.

But *Pins and Needles* is no everyday show, far from it. The words and music are big time, starting with an intriguing number, "Sing me a song with social significance," and carrying through twenty clever sketches. They'd rather be left, these I.L.G.W.U. players, and so there is plenty of keen satire in the lyrics. National and international sacred cows come in for hilarious treatment. Harold J. Rome, responsible for most of the music and lyrics, has contrived to put his "social significance" into highly entertaining packages. This reviewer hasn't laughed as much since seeing Chaplin's *Modern Times*.

Because there are almost no let-downs, it is hard to single out particular sketches for special mention. Some of them have been seen and heard before. "We'd Rather Be Right" is top-notch entertainment that scores off the tories' patriotic camouflage in a song which disposes of all progressive ideas with the chant "Call them un-American." "Sunday in the Park" is a skillfully presented "idyll" that underlines the grotesque congestion of our cities, while "Economics I," a sketch by Charles Friedman, has borrowed most amusingly from Rube Goldberg's mad inventions to show the economic cycle. It begins when the banker shoots the manufacturer who climbs a step-ladder to blackjack the wholesaler who swats the retailer who squirts seltzer at the consumer who sits and takes it with a clash of cymbals and an idiotic expression.

"A Lesson in Etiquette" follows the intermission, "It's not cricket to picket" being the theme song of an elegantly gowned socialite who finally breaks down and curses the strikers who get in her way. "One Big Union for Two" introduces haunting music and the provocative line, "Fifty Million Union Men Can't Be Wrong."

Because they are well trained (I noticed only one missed cue) and have such good sketches to work in, the entire cast not only turn in a smooth performance but obviously have a swell time doing it. The acting, dancing and singing seem quite professional. Though Al Eben, Ruth Rubenstein and Paul Seymour might be singled out for praise, they are only three of many who help to make *Pins and Needles* distinctly a smash-hit review.

Until January first the show will be put on only Friday and Saturday, after that time Labor Stage expects it to run six nights a week for at least three months. With tickets at fifty cents to $1.50, *Pins and Needles* shapes up as the amusement of the month. Don't miss it. WILLIAM B. SMITH.

Anna Sokolow and Other Dancers

IT is a matter of record now that Anna Sokolow made her "official" debut at the Guild Theatre under the auspices of the NEW MASSES and took the Guild definitely by storm. It shouldn't be difficult to lose oneself in the rush of emotional acclaim with which the young dancer was received. I went into a bit of a rapture on the young artist myself. Her work calls for it. It has all the qualities that make for the warm emotional response. It is simple, human, direct.

Her concert was devoted principally to works that have been seen in and about New York these past four years: *Speaker; Strange American Funeral,* set to Mike Gold's poem; *Ballade;* her anti-fascist *War Poem;* a more sharply pointed *Case History;* and the light, satiric *Four Little Salon Pieces.* Of the new dances, *Opening Dance* is a stylized treatment of what might have been called "walking in the streets," a sympathetic portrait in urban gestures. It was evidently in the nature of a manifesto. Opening dances are usually that —it has become something of a tradition. They are the dancer's statement on her approach to her art. Anna Sokolow's *Opening Dance* declared her kinship with the people, urban people, their "walks" in life, the simplicity of their gestures, the honesty of their emotions and action. These people are her material, the source and substance of her dancing. *Opening Dance* is a warm and simple demonstration of the dancer's allegiance.

Slaughter of the Innocents, the only other new work on the program, derives from Spain, from the struggles of a people against the fascist invasion. It is emotionally tense, a characterization reminiscent in its movement of the women you saw in *Heart of Spain* (after the slaughter of the innocent) and as taut. Powerful in its simple gesture, in its simple statement, it projects through tortured understatement a profound sympathy and understanding.

Heart of Spain was inclined to choke one with an emotional rage. *Slaughter of the Innocent* moves in the more tender human

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phases. It is quiet, restrained, too much so I thought; it has the quieting effect of great sorrow rather than the invocative qualities such a portrait might have aroused, the qualities that dynamically move out of her poignant anti-fascist blasts. Anna Sokolow unquestionably is always the master of the situation. She works beautifully, moves delicately through the most difficult subtleties in composition and meaning. Her compositions, sensitively reticent, are rich in sentiment and keenly pointed. For a young dancer she has developed at a surprising swift pace, and her art is a mature and telling one. She undoubtedly leads the way for proletarian dancers.

There is no question that Alex North, whose excellent music she uses almost exclusively, ranks among the best of the composers of music for the modern dance.

Other of our young revolutionary dancers have been active, and at the last Ninety-second Street (N. Y.) Y.M.H.A. concert (this "Y" has been presenting some rather good programs) under the ægis of the American Dance Association, Lily Mehlman, Jane Dudley, Sophie Maslow, and José Limon and his group appeared in a performance of considerable note. While it can't be said that any of these young choreographers has reached a completely mature and personal idiom, each draws concretely and abundantly from the living struggles of the people, and their dances have the impact that derives from such substance.

Lily Mehlman's *Harvest Song* (which last year won a dance award), lyric and delicately turned, grows out of a sympathy for the workers in the fields. Her *Lullaby for a Dead Child,* which compares with Anna Sokolow's *Slaughter of the Innocents,* also moves out of Spain, a simple character study, stirring and poignant with grief. From Spain, too, is the *Evacuacion* of Jane Dudley and Sophie Maslow, in small tableaux and stylized figures—the moving story of the abandoning of homes and the villages after the slaughter of the innocents and the lullaby for a dead child. It recalls the retreat from Málaga. It has the keen quality and force of a dirge and protest.

They are not angry pieces that these young dancers have done, but pieces touched with the passion and warmth of woman's (and man's) fraternal and human compassion for and understanding of the people.

José Limon's *Danza de la Muerte* is also called forth by the Franco-Mussolini-Hitler invasion (as was reported from Bennington), a dance in protest and condemnation. Unfortunately, it is considerably cramped by a preoccupation with intellectual concepts. A more human and less ideal treatment of his subject matter should enliven and point his work much.

Of the other dances on the program, there were Sophie Maslow's lyric *Two Songs for Lenin,* which have already won much acclaim for their simplicity and warmth; Jane Dudley's grotesque and broadly satiric *Four Por-*

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traits from the world of the petty bourgeoisie, her still-to-be-clarified anti-Nazi *Cult of Blood;* and José Limon's moving Mexican *Hymn* and his amusing Stravinsky *Suite.*

All these have been previously presented. The new works, in addition to *Evacuacion,* were Lily Mehlman's *Girl,* Jane Dudley's naïve *Fantasy* (*After Images of a Movie*) done with benefit of a chair, and Sophie Maslow's *Ragged Hungry Blues* and *Runaway Rag.* In *Girl,* whatever Lily Mehlman intended, the composition founders on the rocks of abstract thinking. The conflict, the girl developing through adolescence to a knowledge that "the world [is] her home," is built on psychological introspective planes, and while the dance itself is not without the sensitivity of the dancer, it never fully emerges in concrete terms.

Sophie Maslow is evidently experimenting with new syncopations, attempting to translate a "song by Aunt Molly Jackson" and the story of the Negro pursued by a lynch mob into contemporary jazz rhythms. It is a logical development for the dancer, but as yet these compositions remain experimental.

Jane Dudley's *Fantasy* is her first venture into sympathetic studies, and she has made a good job of it. The dance is infused with considerable warmth, and while it is not her most ambitious work, it is highly gratifying.

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Diet. Dr. Roy Upham, chief of the department of gastro-enterology at the Flower-Fifth Ave. Hospital, talks on desirable and damaging diets, Wed., Dec. 8, 3:45 p.m., C.B.S.

Harold L. Ickes. The secretary of the interior speaks under the auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, Wed., Dec. 8, 9 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

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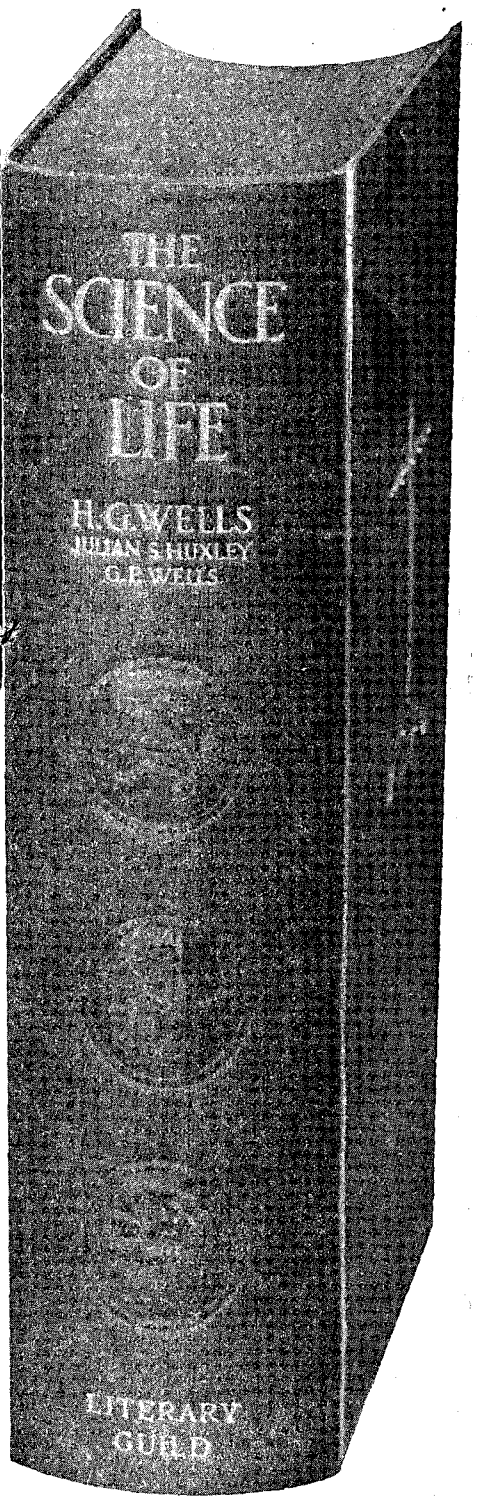

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